# MARGIE'S MISTAKE AND OTHER STORIES

MARY F. STRONG

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# MARGIE'S MISTAKE

AND

# OTHER STORIES

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BY MRS. MARY F. STRONG

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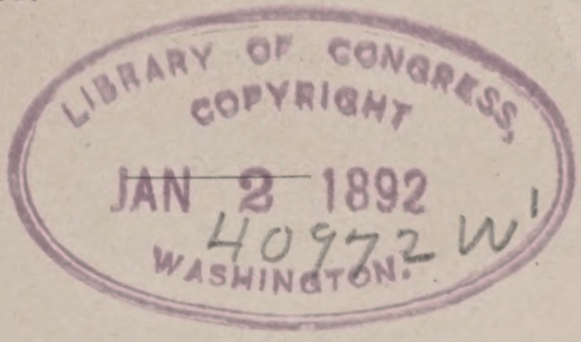
"Be true to the dreams of thy youth and they shall yet be fulfilled."

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TO

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

MRS. FRANCES E. RUSS,

OF OAKLAND, CAL.,

THIS VOLUME,

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE

LONG YEARS OF UNCLOUDED FRIENDSHIP,

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

# INTRODUCTION.

The writer of these introductory lines knows that the articles contained in this little volume were not, at the time they were written, intended for publication in this form. Admiration and appreciation of them, however, and a desire to see them again "in print," has caused the author to thus publish them for private distribution as souvenirs among her friends.

She makes no artistic pretensions as a writer, and yet they have been considered "gems of thought" and "jewels of utterance" by those who have read or heard them. Such as these are all too few in the domain of thought or literature and those to whom they will be distributed will appreciate the pity, that a mind that burns so brightly has been prevented from giving more of its light to the world. They, and any who read this volume, may know that the impressions from plates of steel no more truthfully represent the delicate, though ineffaceable, tracings of the

engraver, than do the poems in this volume delineate a few of the thoughts, feelings and emotions of the author.

The little love stories herein told may touch a chord of semblance, or perhaps find their counterpart in the lives of some of the multitude "who dream, and wish, and strive, and (sometimes) err."

The descriptive articles will, to some, recall "the days of auld lang syne," which the writer thereof hopes will ne'er be forgot. And, finally, if the publication and presentation of this keepsake shall increase the sum of human happiness be it ever so little, or awaken for her in the minds of the recipients one kindlier thought or friendlier feeling, then will the author be content.

J. M. S.

CHICAGO, Nov. 14, 1891.

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# MARGIE'S MISTAKE.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE LOST CHILD.

The beautiful and once happy home of Mr. Charles Lagrange had, at the beginning of our story, been suddenly converted into a house of mourning, and the richly-furnished apartments that so recently resounded with laughter and song were now transformed into a sepulchre for the living.

In this luxuriant home, surrounded by all the beauty and elegance that art could devise or wealth bestow, sat a pale-faced woman, whose tearful eyes and vacant stare foretold a grief that had well-nigh dethroned her reason.

Three years previous she had been led to the altar by the millionaire banker, Charles Lagrange, whose reputed wealth and high

social position had established for him a widespread reputation and made him the cynosure for the envious eyes of a score of ambitious mammas with eligible daughters. The crowning glory of this union was the advent of a blue-eyed, flaxen haired, girl baby, the first anniversary of whose birth had just been celebrated with grand eclat.

The young mother, who had formerly reigned as society queen, found the old life of folly and fashion truly irksome after having tasted the sweeter joys of motherhood, and it was with unfeigned pleasure that she assumed the responsibilities of her new relationship in that purer and holier atmosphere which shed its incense like a saintly benediction over this peaceful and happy home.

The numerous duties which fall to the common lot of wife and mother were faithfully discharged, while ample time was found for those kindly deeds of charity, the multiplicity of which can hardly be realized, save by the few willing workers

who seek to relieve the cries of distress that fall upon their listening ears. In all the varied duties which filled the life of this young mother, nothing was paramount to the absorbing interest she felt in her babe. Youth, wealth and social position, with this delicate little bud that gave promise of blossoming into the fairest of flowers—what more could earth have in store for her? But, alas! while the morning of life betokens a clear and perfect day, the sunshine of our happiness is too often obscured by the dark clouds of disappointment ere it reaches the meridian!

Who can analyze the emotions of this grief-stricken household, as husband and wife sit gazing into each other's eyes, seeking in vain for one trace of hope to give solace in this dark hour of affliction? The wife had been scanning the columns of a daily paper which has fallen from her nerveless grasp. Raising her tear-stained eyes to those of her husband with a wistful and reverential look, she exclaims: "Still no

hope, no light, save to treasure up in memory those transitory joys with which our past has been so replete."

The husband tenderly folds her in his protecting arms, and with a breaking heart endeavors to soothe and comfort her as she falls sobbing upon his breast. "My dear wife, we can at least unite our humble petitions to Him who watches the sparrow's fall, that this cup of bitterness may soon pass away."

Four long weeks, and still no tidings of the kidnapped child! Private detectives and police officials had about exhausted all the shrewdness known to the profession in their research for the missing child, but thus far all efforts were in vain. Large rewards had been offered for the apprehension of the abductors. Still no gleam of hope had as yet lightened the suspense of the bereaved parents. A strange-appearing young woman had been seen in the neighborhood carrying in her arms a babe purporting to be about the age of the little missing one,

but beyond this no ray of light was cast upon the mysterious disappearance of Baby Lagrange.

At first the parents indulged the hope that but little difficulty would be encountered in regaining the child, believing it had been stolen for the express purpose of obtaining a ransom, thus quieting their fears in the vain hope of speedy recovery. Would that they might never know the bitterness of disappointment! But, while no means were left untried, a whole month had passed, and still the affair was enshrouded in mystery. And so the days grew into weeks and the weeks into months, until hope had given place to despair, and yet the fruitless search was kept up.

Kind friends clustered about the grief-stricken parents and freely offered such poor consolation as lay in their power, but alas! such bereavements are too deep for human sympathy! And so it came to pass, after the lapse of several months, that the mother was stricken down with a lingering illness,

and for many weeks lay partially unconscious, piteously moaning in the intervals of returning reason for her lost darling.

Time passed on, and instead of succumbing to the ravages of disease, the unhappy wife slowly recovered, only to find that her devoted husband, worn out with hope deferred, had become a physical wreck, and that the continued mental strain had culminated in a mild form of insanity. Perfectly harmless, the poor clouded brain was ever indulging the fond imagination that it had at last discovered the secret hiding place of his lost babe; and nothing was more pathetic and touching than to see him fondly caressing each dimpled cherub that chanced to meet his eye, calling it by every endearing epithet known to the vocabulary of a doting father.

The poor wife watched each flickering ray of intellect, praying for the return of reason, even as she had prayed for the return of the babe; and, with true wifely devotion, endeavored by all the means at her command

to divert the mind of her husband from the one thought which had shattered his mental as well as his physical organization. In this she was doomed to disappointment, and one year from the day on which the child had so mysteriously disappeared, the father was confined to a private asylum, where he was pronounced from the first incurable.

After this the mother took up the search with a still stronger incentive to work, feeling sure that the restoration of the babe was the only means of restoring the mental faculties of her husband. Far and near she continued the search, and at the expiration of another year, she one day received intelligence that a child, believed to be the missing one, was dying at the Foundlings' Home in a neighboring city. Hastening thither, she arrived in time to see the little sufferer breathe its last, and to hear from the matron's lips the story that it had been found one morning sitting upon the steps of the Institution; and, being too young to tell how

or when she came there, was taken in and cared for.

Upon inquiry, however, it was learned that a closely veiled woman had been seen leading the little one inside the gate at an early hour, and most likely had left it there, knowing it would soon be discovered by the inmates. Farther than this nothing was known, and the simple fact that the infant was about the same age as the lost one, was in itself but slight proof of its identity; yet the keen maternal eye fancied at once that she traced some resemblance to her long-lost babe in the little pinched, emaciated form that lay before her. Still another and more convincing piece of evidence was brought to bear upon the case, from the fact that, upon a close examination of the body, a small purple spot was discovered, which closely resembled a birth mark which the anxious mother recalled as having been noticeable upon the person of her child.

The heart-broken woman needed nothing more to convince her that the little bunch

of inanimate clay lying before her was indeed all that belonged to earth of her long-lost babe. With a feeling that a buried grief was less hard to bear than a living trouble, and a sense of relief that the long suspense was over at last, she wearily wended her way back to her desolate home, bearing with her the precious remains of her little Helene.

The father was brought from the Asylum to gaze upon the dead form of his child, as hope was entertained that it might possibly restore his lost reason; but, while he feebly pronounced it his own little one, and at times showed some signs of mental improvement, the strain had been too great, and ere another year had passed, he was laid in the family vault beside the remains of Baby Helene.

After a few years of quiet mourning, in which she shrank from all social intercourse, the disconsolate widow, broken in health, yet bearing many traces of her former beauty, removed to a distant city, where,

surrounded by kind friends, she sought to bury the sad memories that clouded the early sunshine of her domestic happiness. How well she succeeded may be determined by the fact that, three years later, the announcement of the marriage of Mrs. Charles Lagrange to a retired army officer appeared in the columns of a leading journal.

Many were the hearty congratulations offered by admiring friends, who had known and loved this amiable lady in the midst of her desolation and despair, and all were happy to know that the fountain of earthly joy was not dried up forever, but that from the dying embers of the unhappy past, fresh-born hopes and sweet aspirations had awakened to newness of life. And now as we draw a veil over the opening chapter of our story, let us hope that the flowers, which perchance may bloom along the pathway of the future, may emit as sweet and subtle a perfume as if the past were unclouded by events of so great magnitude.

## CHAPTER II.

### MARGIE.

"She's a foine lass, that—aye, a foine lass—and the pictur' of her sainted mither," were the words of old Michael, as he brushed away the silent tear that was coursing down his thin, weather-beaten face. "Margie, come here to me and sit on yer old father's knee. Margie, do ye hear?"

"Yes, father, I'm coming," said a sweet, childish voice, as a bright young girl came bounding forth from a low, moss-covered cabin, which was the humble habitation of Michael O'Connor and his only child.

Placing herself upon her father's knee, as he sat upon the rude porch in front of their lowly dwelling, she clasped both white shapely arms about his neck, and looking into his dim, sunken eyes, asked why he looked so sad.

"I was thinking, my sweet bonnie lass, of

the time when you'd be tiring of this quiet life here, all alone with yer old father, and be wantin' to run off with some handsome young lad and make a leetle nest all to yersel'—eh, Margie?"

"Papa, whatever put such nonsense into your head?" said the girl, at the same time imprinting a hearty kiss upon the old man's wrinkled brow.

"Hey, child, hev' ye never thought o' the loikes yersel'?"

Dropping her head upon his breast, she replied, in a low, pensive voice: "No one has ever spoken to me of this, and I could hardly dwell upon anything that seems so very far away."

"That's not the question, lass. Did ye never think the young master might ask ye to be his own leetle wife some day?"

"Oh, father, father!" and the fair young head fell upon his bosom, while great tears filled her big brown eyes; "please, papa, never speak of the son of Captain Fairchild wishing to wed the daughter of his

father's gardener. It is absurd, it is impossible!"

"Well, lass, he hangs around considerable o' late, on one pretence and another, and I dunno what it all means."

Raising her tear-stained face to his, she begged to be released, and disengaging herself from his embrace, walked slowly away. Reaching her own poorly-furnished apartments, she threw herself upon the bed, and burying her face in the pillow, sobbed piteously. "Oh, has my father at last discovered my long-hidden secret! Does he know that his poor foolish child is so weak as to give her heart unsought to Arthur Fairchild? No, no; I must—and will—crush out this wild passion that is fast gaining control of my every thought!"

Arthur Fairchild was the only son of a wealthy and aristocratic father; and, although not a dissolute youth in the broadest sense which that term implies, was, using a homely phrase, sowing his wild oats. He had just finished his college course, and con-

trary to his father's wishes, had declared himself unwilling to visit the old world previous to entering upon the studies of his chosen profession—that of the law. He preferred to pass his time for the next six months in the enjoyment of his favorite pastime—hunting and fishing—rather than to be under the watchful eye of his maternal ancestor, during an extended European trip.

Captain Fairchild had for many years occupied the lovely home where he now resided, and as the relentless hand of death had severed the silken cord that bound three beautiful and beloved children to earth, he had centered all his hopes upon Arthur, his only remaining child. To gratify his every wish was the father's highest ambition; consequently, when this young gentlemen expressed the desire to remain at home, rather than accompany his mother abroad, the over-indulgent parent was quite ready to yield the point; hence, the proposed European trip for mother and son was a thing only to be realized in imagination.

Arthur Fairchild was an exceedingly handsome young man. His dark flashing eyes bespoke a nature that would submit to no restraint; and, while the father looked upon the petted child of fortune with the fondest admiration, the more sensible but equally loving mother trembled for the future welfare of her wayward son. She feared the result, when once his bark was fairly launched upon the rough sea of life. The parental roof was considered by her as the only safeguard and protection from the evils that doth so easily beset, and she looked forward with grave apprehension to the time when Arthur would leave the home of his childhood. Ah, the patient long-suffering mother little knows, as she pillows the infantile head upon her loving breast, whether the young life she guards so faithfully will cause her to blush at the sacred name of mother, or crown her life in after years with the sweet joys known to those whose children rise up and call them blessed.

One bright afternoon, as Margie was returning from a visit to one of her companions, she very unexpectedly came in contact with young Fairchild, who was reclining listlessly under the shade of a forest tree near the home of old Michael. She was a lovely picture as she came tripping along, her little jaunty hat perched on one side of her head; her long fair curls blown in bewitching confusion over her snowy neck and shoulders, while in her hand she carried an exquisite bouquet of wild-flowers. Singing merrily along, this innocent young maiden was unprepared for the interview that awaited her. As her eyes chanced to rest on Arthur Fairchild, she dropped a low courtesy, while the crimson current mantled her neck and face. She was hurrying timidly past, when he accosted her in the following manner:

"Hey, Margie, my pretty little wild-flower, whither art thou going?"

"I'm going home, sir," she replied, confusedly. "I have been to see a friend who

was my room-mate the winter father sent me to the seminary at D——."

"Ah, indeed; then you have been away to school, have you?"

"Yes, sir; for one year only. I attended the village school here for some time, but my father saved up his earnings, and together with some money my uncle sent me, I was enabled to go away to school for one year."

"Who took care of your father's house in the meantime?"

"My grandmother, sir," she replied; "my father's mother, but she died six months ago, dear old lady, and I was then compelled to return and superintend my father's home. Good day, sir, I must be going."

"Oh no, not so soon, Miss Margie; stay and talk with me, won't you? I like to hear you talk."

"Oh no, sir, it is getting late, and I must hurry home," she timidly answered; "besides, my father does not like to have me talk to strange gentlemen."

"Strange gentlemen, Margie?" replied the

young man, "why, I'm no stranger. I knew you when you were a little bit of a girl."

"Yes, sir, I dare say you did, but you have been away to college for such a long time, and grown to be a man since you knew me, and now you seem very like a stranger."

So saying she swept along, without giving her companion a chance to continue the conversation. After she had disappeared from his admiring gaze he lay upon the cool grass for some time in deep meditation.

"By Jove!" he soliloquized, "she's a stunning pretty girl! Just rig her up in style, and she would play the deuce with more hearts than one. Been to school, too —Jupiter, what eyes! Well, well, I had thought her rather above her class, both in looks and manner, but I'll be whipped if I ever dreamed she could be quite as fascinating as she appears to-day. Wonder what the 'Governor' would say if I should fall in love with this little rustic beauty? Guess I'm in luck after all in giving up that little foreign trip. I'd half a notion to go at one

time, but now I've become somewhat interested in this little piece of femininity and will try to get a bit of fun out of it." So saying he gathered up his fishing-tackle and game-bag and walked slowly toward home.

## CHAPTER III.

### A WAYWARD YOUTH.

For several weeks subsequent to the foregoing interview, Margie seemed restless and uneasy. The bright hue had faded from her cheeks, the old light had gone out of her eyes, and her merry laugh was no more heard to resound through the humble cottage as she performed her daily routine of home duties.

Old Michael saw with painful apprehension the change that had come over his child and vainly endeavored to ascertain the cause, but she maintained unbroken silence when questioned upon the subject, assuring him from time to time that it was but a slight indisposition that would soon pass away.

In the meantime, young Fairchild was ill at ease. He was aware that his father had set his heart upon a union between himself

and the daughter of a city gentleman of wealth and position, and true to the instincts of nature, had fully determined not to allow his affections to be coerced into a channel where they did not voluntarily flow. He had met the young lady but once, and was not at all prepossessed in her favor, and while he was supposed to be in ignorance of his father's wishes regarding the matter, was virtually planning the means of escape.

Blanche DuPere (for this was her name) was the only daughter of Captain Fairchild's dearest friend, and as these gentlemen were possessed of considerable wealth, they had secretly resolved to unite their fortunes in the marriage of the young people, without having consulted their tastes or inclinations in the matter; hence, when informed by his mother that Mr. DuPere with his wife and daughter were about to pay them a visit, Arthur was chagrined, and openly manifested his indignation by asking in no very gentle manner "what in thunder they were coming

up there for," adding that he had hoped for a little peace and quiet, and if they expected him to help entertain old DuPere and family, "they had shot wide of the mark."

"Why, my son," replied his gentle mother, "your father wishes you to make the acquaintance of these very estimable people, thinking thereby to add to your enjoyment, and surely you can have no serious objections to your father's friends paying us a visit."

"I don't care particularly about the old man's coming, but he had better leave his wife and that confounded daughter of his at home."

"Oh, my son, my son! how can you speak in such a rude manner of those for whom you should have the most profound respect," remonstrated the mother. "Arthur, my child," she added, "I deeply regret to learn that your college course has failed to develop those nobler qualities which I would have my son possess. You should certainly

be a gentleman in your mother's presence, if nowhere else."

Seeing that he had wounded the feelings of his mother, he drew near her, and in a tone of humiliation rather than anger, continued: "Well, mother, you know just how it is when we have company. Last summer I was bored to death during the few weeks of vacation, when I wanted to rest, and I should really like to have a little time to spend as my fancy dictates. You see this same old DuPere, with his wife and daughter (the latter I thoroughly dislike), came in upon us, and I was obliged to play the agreeable and humor all her infernal whims. Some fellows may think it's fun to ramble around through the wet grass before breakfast, hunting beetles and caterpillers to stock a girl's menagerie; row her over all the mill-ponds in the vicinity, capturing flies at intervals wherewith to bait a pin hook, when there is not the slightest possibility of her catching anything save a cold in her head; but as for me I can find a more congenial pastime."

"My son," replied the mother, "I am pained at your lack of gallantry."

"Gallantry! there it goes again! Why, mother, girls ought to have a little sense if they expect a fellow to do their bidding. Only think of hearing a girl screech at the sight of a grasshopper; go off into a *feint* at the croaking of a tree toad, and be thrown into a fit of hysterics at the near approach of a devil's darning-needle! Oh bosh! my fun's up for the summer! Well, well this is a pretty mess to rope a fellow into." And having thus unburdened his over-wrought feelings, he sauntered away in the direction of old Michael's dwelling.

Arriving at the gate, he saw Margie seated upon a grassy mound beneath the shade of a huge oak that stood near the entrance of her humble cottage. In her hands she held a piece of fancy-work, and as Arthur approached and bade her good morning, she modestly dropped her eyes and seemed intent upon weaving the bright colored worsteds into a shapely mass.

"What have you there so pretty?" he kindly questioned.

"Oh," she replied, "only a scarf which is to be my father's Christmas present."

Seeing the pained look upon her face, he drew near her and abruptly asked why she so much dreaded an interview with him. "Is my presence disagreeable to you, Margie?" he asked in a somewhat serious tone.

She arose and was about to depart without answering, when she suddenly turned to him and in a voice trembling with emotion said: "Mr. Fairchild, please never come here again. I think your visits distress my father, and I —I'd rather not meet you."

Having thus spoken, she burst into tears, and hastily swept past him; but he caught her by the hand, and drawing her near him was about to speak, when she raised her beautiful tear stained eyes to his and implored him to release her. Gazing fondly upon the frightened girl, in whom he was each moment becoming more and more interested, he promised to terminate the seemingly painful

interview, if she would first candidly tell him her objection to seeing him alone.

"Is it," said he, "contrary to your own wishes, Margie, or for your father's sake that you make this request? You do not fear me, do you? Listen to me, Margie. Ever since you were a mere child my mother has had a watchful care over you. I remember when I stood before your mother's open grave, and saw your father press you close to his breast, and amid sobs of anguish beg heaven's protection for his motherless child; and do you think, Margie, I would consciously harm one hair of your head? Believe me, before heaven, I would not!"

With a wild, frightened stare she looked about her, and being reassured by the gentle manner in which he addressed her, she blushingly replied: "Oh no, no, Mr. Fairchild; I do not fear you, but—but——"

"Speak, and tell me all," interrupted the young man.

"Well, then, I will say that, had my sta-

tion in life been such as to warrant me in receiving your visits, I should gladly have entered your name upon my list of friends, for I have so few."

"Hang it all, that's what I thought!" muttered the youth in an undertone; "so much for the aristocratic blood that courses through my veins. Well, well, Margie, if this is all, then allow me to say that I alone am responsible for my choice of acquaintances; and if I feel that you are conferring a pleasure upon me by accepting my friendship whose business is it, if not my own?"

Ere these words had died upon his lips, the voice of old Michael was heard in the distance, as he came trudging along home after a hard day's labor, merrily singing some familiar Irish ballad.

"There now, you must go at once, and please do not come again," urged the shrinking girl in a tremulous voice.

With a hurried "Good-by until we meet again," he quickly obeyed her injunction,

mentally resolving to visit her again at his earliest convenience.

As Margie went about, silently preparing the evening meal, the quick eye of her anxious parent discovered that her step was light and elastic and something of the old brightness shone in her beaming eyes. Thinking to divine the cause, he abruptly asked if the young master had been round again. Shocked and surprised at this sudden question, the true answer to which she shrank from giving, Margie hesitated a moment and then timidly replied:

"Yes, father, Mr. Fairchild called here today, and I—and I—I asked him not to come again, as I thought his visits displeased you; and besides, I did not wish to see him myself."

"Ah ha, lass; and had yer the courage to tell him the loikes o' that? You are right, my purty; let the young sprig know as he is not wanted here." And with a feeling of satisfaction, old Michael sank back in his chair, and ere long was enjoying a refreshing sleep.

With the bitter consciousness of having deceived her father, by leaving the impression that young Fairchild's visits were distasteful to her, poor Margie sadly recalled the early lessons taught by her mother, in which dissimulation was set forth as being equivalent in its evil propensity to that of absolute falsehood.

As old Michael rubbed his sleepy eyes and drew near the table with a yawn, he glanced at Margie's pale, troubled face, which a short time previous had beamed with pleasure, and being unable to determine the cause of this sudden transition, began greedily to devour the food set before him, while he revolved the question in his own mind, and decided that verily the ways of girls were mysterious and past finding out.

## CHAPTER IV.

### YOUNG LOVE'S DREAM.

A few weeks later all was confusion at the stately residence of Captain Fairchild. The city friends had arrived, and true to Arthur's prediction, he was mustered into the service of Miss DuPere, much against his inclination, for be it said to his credit, he was not a male flirt, and having sworn allegiance to his own heart in the matter of choosing a life companion, he was annoyed at being compelled to appear interested in a young lady for whom he entertained no feeling save that of aversion.

Blanche DuPere was a tall stately blonde, with a cold reticent face, which bore the impress of a life devoted to fashionable society, and wholly devoid of that sweet simplicity that must characterize the woman whom Arthur would call wife. The remembrance of his last interview with Margie

filled his youthful heart with emotions to which he had hitherto been a stranger, and he feared lest his strong impulsive nature should lead him into saying and doing things which upon mature deliberation he might regret.

Humiliating as would have been the thought to his proud parents, had they suspected the fact, it was, nevertheless, true that Arthur Fairchild was fast giving way to an uncontrollable passion for the old gardener's daughter, and he really longed for an opportunity when unobserved he might pay another brief visit to the humble cottage, but in this he was doomed to disappointment, as all pre-arranged plans for the accomplishment of this purpose were overthrown by his father, whose keen eye was quick to discover the fact that his son was in no wise anxious to be monopolized by Mademoiselle DuPere, and who was ever ready to devise some scheme that would keep him a prisoner at her side.

Finding himself foiled in his frequent

attempts to obtain leave of absence, Arthur relinquished all hope of ever seeing Margie again, until after such time as the unwelcome guests should have taken their departure.

As the days dragged their weary length along Arthur became sullen and morose, giving little heed to his surroundings, while he secretly wished for a speedy termination to his state of intolerable servitude. His mother, discovering her son's disquietude, thought to divert his mind by making arrangements for a large social gathering, ostensibly given in honor of their distinguished guests, but really for the purpose of trying to arouse her son from the morbid state in which he had fallen. Accordingly due preparations were made, and all the gentry round about were invited to participate in the coming festivities.

As the time approached Captain Fairchild's handsome residence was the scene of confusion, and while able masters of the culinary art were duly installed, the

work of decorative art was in no wise neglected, and all that refined taste could suggest was lavishly bestowed upon the various apartments. Wreaths of exquisite flowers adorned the majestic walls and hung in festoons from every available nook.

As fairy fingers were giving the last finishing touch to this floral display, Arthur sat gloomily looking on and silently meditating upon the coming event. He bitterly denounced in his own mind the relentless hand of fate that had placed an inseparable barrier between the children reared in the arms of affluence and those of humble origin. Why, thought he, should the accident of birth and education elevate a small portion of God's universe to the highest pinnacle of social distinction; while the vast multitude, even though endowed with nature's noblest attributes, must meekly tread the lowly walks of life, forever crushing the desires and aspirations which are placed in their bosoms by an all-wise Creator?

As the guests assembled, filling the large drawing-room with youth, beauty and fashion, Arthur moved about among the gay throng, manifesting but little interest in any particular object, yet bestowing a friendly greeting upon all, and evincing well-feigned pleasure as he renewed the acquaintance of many who in former years had shared his juvenile sports.

Miss DuPere was the cynosure of all eyes, and as Arthur's arm encirled her waist as they whirled away in the dreamy rapture of an inspiring waltz, many were the shafts of envy aimed at the seemingly happy pair that rumor had already characterized as engaged. The hearts of both ambitious *pater familias* swelled with pride as they gazed in admiration upon this handsome couple, and secretly cherished the fond hope that ere long they would be called upon to bestow the paternal blessing.

As the evening wore away and the hour for refreshment was announced, Arthur's attention was suddenly attracted to a slight

girlish figure clad in the garb of a servant and flitting from place to place in obedience to his mother's commands. For a moment his heart stood still, but regaining his composure, he quietly excused himself and passed into an adjacent room. A few moments of impatient waiting and his object was attained, for before him stood the frightened, shrinking form of poor Margie.

With a feeling akin to anger, as he looked into the pale, haggard face of this sensitive young creature and saw the pleading eyes upturned to his, he asked in an undertone how she came to be present upon that occasion.

"Oh, don't—please don't speak to me, Mr. Fairchild," she replied, in a trembling voice, and turning to flee from him she was arrested by the determined look in his dark flashing eyes.

Seeing they were unobserved, he eagerly seized her by the hand, and before she was aware of his purpose was being hurried along a narrow path leading into the garden. A

few steps brought them beneath the friendly shelter of a vine-clad harbor, where, seating her upon a rustic bench, Arthur placed himself at her side. Taking her hand in his he tenderly inquired what she was doing there.

"Oh, Mr. Fairchild," she answered, "it is not of my own free will that I came, but your good mother, thinking I could assist her as well as enjoy seeing so many grand people, kindly bade me come, and I did not dare refuse; but," pleaded the frightened girl, "I feel very ill, and with her permission I would gladly go home at once.

The soft moonlight creeping through the vines overhead revealed the pained look upon her face, and as Arthur gazed into the deep tender eyes, the magic power of which drew forth the noblest impulses of his nature, he realized that the keys to his happiness were in the hands of this innocent young girl. The flimsy veil of social distinction was thrown aside, and Arthur Fairchild for the first time in his life was hopelessly in love.

Was it sympathy only for this friendless girl that prompted these feelings, or was it the noble instincts of manhood asserting their right? We will presently see.

Unable to conceal his emotion, he tenderly placed his arm about her waist and with a feeling of pride, rather than humiliation, in a few hasty words told her his love.

"Margie," said he, "I here offer you that deeper and stronger affection which emanates from a true manly heart, and will ask you if you can give me that nearer and dearer place that I fain would occupy."

"Oh, Mr. Fairchild," began the happy but half-frightened girl——

"Call me Arthur," interrupted the lover, "for henceforth we are equals."

"Well then, Arthur," she began, as the name trembled on her faltering lips, if you wish me to be frank and honest, I will say that you have long since occupied that nearer and dearer place of which you now speak. There, be content and question me no more, for my heart tells me that it is

wrong to confess a love that can only bring misery to us both.

"Hush, Margie," said he, clasping her more closely, while he imprinted upon her lips a lover's kiss.

The guileless young creature scarcely realized the true meaning of all this, but she felt that a great joy, hitherto unknown, had come into her life.

"And now, Margie, my own darling, go at once to my mother and tell her you are not feeling well and wish to go home. She will excuse you. Speak to no one but Mrs. Fairchild, and do not mention having seen me. Trust me, Margie, and no harm shall ever come to you."

With a hurried good-night they parted. A few minutes later Arthur joined the company, and seating himself by Miss DuPere's side, was soon engaged in pleasant conversation; and, although he endeavored to disguise the emotions that thrilled his heart and sent the hot young blood coursing through his veins with increased

rapidity, he was unable to conceal the fact that his thoughts were quite foreign to the subjects of conversation. This vague, dreamy state of mind becoming apparent to all, Miss DuPere banteringly demanded an explanation.

"You have been running away from us, Mr. Fairchild, during which time you were sadly missed, said she; and now upon your return appear to be studying futurity, or solving some knotty problem connected with the past. You will please permit me to occupy the confessional throne, while you unburden your soul of its hidden secrets. I will promise absolution in all cases where the heart has not become entangled in the meshes of Cupid, but I realize in such a case it would be rather a delicate undertaking, and I should feel constrained to allow the barbed arrow to remain in its hiding place until removed by the fair hand that placed it there."

The sensitive nature of young Fairchild could not bear the probe without flinch-

ing, but he attempted to smile as he answered.

"Ah, indeed; then I am not to be forgiven if I have fallen an innocent victim to the tyrant queen," and he bit his lip with suppressed indignation, remarking in a casual manner that he had met an old friend out on the veranda and had stolen a brief interview, whereupon with a proud curl of the lip, he adroitly changed the conversation.

The remainder of the evening passed pleasantly, but it was with a sigh of relief that Arthur paid his respects to the numerous guests as they took their departure. Tired and nervous, he gladly sought the welcome solitude of his own room, there to meditate upon the strange transactions of the last few hours. Throwing himself across the bed he was soon enjoying a refreshing sleep, and awoke at broad daylight from a pleasant dream, in which he saw a fair young face bending over him in tender solicitude, but which vanished as he stretched forth his hand to secure the coveted treasure.

## CHAPTER V.

### A FARCICAL AFFAIR.

The wayward son and daughter were not long in divining the intentions of the intriguing parents, and could the gray-haired sire of Blanche DuPere have looked through the windows of his daughter's heart, he would have there discovered, seated upon a majestic throne, the idol of her soul. He would then have realized how vain was the attempt to uproot the affection so long bestowed upon happy Ralph Mortimer, to whom she had been secretly affianced for over a year.

Captain Fairchild had quietly informed his son that he was expected to offer himself in marriage to Blanche DuPere, and that by acceding to his wishes in this respect he would not only enhance his father's happiness, but insure to himself the whole of his vast fortune, which, coupled with the

immense wealth which that young lady would inherit, must redound to the credit of both families and make him the wealthiest man in the country. This was offered as sufficient reason for him to regard the match as very desirable in all respects, and one that would be agreeable to both families, assuring him at the same time that he was looked upon with favor by this very fortunate young lady.

Arthur possessed quite enough knowledge of human nature to know that, although Blance DuPere received the numerous little attentions which he bestowed upon her with true politeness and well feigned pleasure, her heart's best affections were not being wasted upon him, and however much she appeared to be interested, she was simply playing a role in accordance with her father's wishes; hence, the tale of mutual grievances would be the more easily narrated.

One bright afternoon, as the sun was receding behind the western hills, the fond parents looked with silent admiration upon

the young couple as they strolled leisurely along toward the lake upon which Captain Fairchild had placed a small sail-boat for the pleasure of his distinguished guests; but, ere they had reached the water's edge, they turned down a narrow path which led in the direction of old Michael's cabin. Arriving at a spot which afforded a fine view of the lake, Blanche suggested that they rest awhile in this picturesque spot and enjoy the cool evening breeze.

Arthur was only too willing to embrace this opportunity, for his rebellious feelings were fast becoming uncontrollable, and he longed to have an understanding and acquaint his fair companion of the conspiracy into which their parents had entered, feeling assured of her co-operation in a matter so vital to the happiness of both. Accordingly, Blanche seated herself upon a huge bowlder, throwing a light shawl over her shoulders as a protection from the cool night air.

Arthur placed himself at her side, and after a brief silence, in which he was medi-

tating upon the best form in which to acquaint her of the awkward position in which he was placed, suddenly exclaimed:

"Miss DuPere, I have something important to say to you, and although this may not seem the time or the place for an exchange of confidences, still I feel impelled to avail myself of the present opportunity of speaking to you upon a very delicate subject. You may or may not be aware that our paternal ancestors are indulging the hope that sooner or later their respective families may be united in closer relations than those of ordinary friendship; in fact, I am informed by my officious but well-meaning father that such is the case, and farther, that I am expected to take the initiatory step in that direction."

"Ah, indeed," replied the young lady, slightly blushing; "I think I fully comprehend the situation, and will ask what the result will be, providing neither of us feel disposed to lend our aid in the furtherance of this delightful scheme?"

"That is precisely what I wish to discuss," eagerly exclaimed the youth.

"Well then, Mr. Fairchild, I will frankly say that I have been aware of the wishes of our parents, and have not been unmindful of the embarrassment to which you were subjected, but if it is indeed as you have said, that you are to take the initiatory step, suppose you do so at once and put an end to all this folly. In obedience to your father's commands there remains but one thing to be done, and that is to fall at my feet in the most approved and modern style, and there declare the love you do not feel and beg me to accept a place in your heart to which I never aspired, and I will guarantee you safe delivery from such a miserable incumbrance as I should prove. Your honored parent can urge nothing further than that you comply with his wishes in this matter, and you may trust the result to me."

Bending upon one knee in the attitude of a supplicant suing for mercy, Arthur, in a tone of mock humility and becoming rever-

ence, pronounced the solemn words, "Blanche will you do me the honor to become my wife?"

Ere these words had died on his lips he was startled by a sharp sound as of the sudden breaking of a dry limb. Thinking it was caused by the wind rustling through the trees or more likely perhaps his own imagination, he gave the matter no thought, and was soon gayly chatting with Blanche, who was thoroughly enjoying her latest proposal. Of course she breathed a low refusal offering to bind up his lacerated feelings with promises of everlasting friendship, sisterly affection and kindred remedies, while he in turn was laughingly accusing her of trifling with the susceptible heart of an innocent youth, and then crushing his fondest hopes just as doubt was giving way to blissful certainty.

"And now, Mr. Fairchild," said Blanche, "you are at liberty to acquaint your respected father of the fact that Miss DuPere regrets her inability to gratify his wishes,

and modestly declines the honors which his generosity would bestow. This will exonerate you from all blame in not marrying against your own will and that of the lady he so unwisely selected for you. I can readily heal the wound in my dear father's heart by assuring him that my future happiness depends upon his consent to my marriage with the man to whom I have long been affianced, but for obvious reasons of a personal nature have allowed the engagement to remain a secret. So you see, my dear sir, that a previous arrangement, if nothing more, would deter me from accepting the highest honor at your hands that man can bestow upon mortal woman."

So saying, the two started off in a homeward direction, exultant over the happy termination of what promised, a few hours previous, to be a rather complicated affair, while Arthur was vainly endeavoring to stamp upon his facial organs the impress of one whose fondest hopes had been suddenly crushed.

Scarcely had the sound of their voices died in the distance, when, bounding forth like a hunted deer, and with a wild startled cry, poor Margie rushed from the spot where she had been an unwilling listener to those cruel words which had extinguished all the light that a few hours previous had illumined her young and trusting heart.

Could Arthur Fairchild have seen that sweet pale face, those ashen lips that sought to frame a prayer to high heaven for guidance in her hour of grief; could he have seen the anguish that rent the heart of this pure young girl, who had been a silent witness to what she believed to be his perfidy, and ventured one word of explanation, he might have spared her as well as himself, the dark hours that followed.

With bated breath and throbbing heart, Margie heard those solemn words, "Blanche will you do me the honor to become my wife," and closing her eyes and ears to all else, she awaited in hopeless despair the

termination of that interview, believing herself abandoned by the man who had won her heart, and then cast her aside as a child would a plaything of which it had grown weary.

"And this," she cried, "is but a just recompense for my blind folly, in allowing myself to love a man so far above my station. It is finished, life has nothing more in store for me!"

She grew icy cold as she stood there in the pale twilight and recalled the happy hour when Arthur Fairchild had bade her trust him, after having poured into her willing ears that sweet tale of old, which to the susceptible heart of an innocent young girl is the crowning glory of her life. She felt that long years had passed since she listened to those words which filled her life with the sweetest joy she had ever known; since Arthur Fairchild had placed upon her lips the seal of a betrothal kiss. But all was over.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE MISSING GIRL.

One whole week had elapsed, and still no trace of the missing girl. All efforts to learn her whereabouts, or the cause of her sudden departure, were unavailing. Old Michael had returned at a late hour one evening from the town, whither he had gone in the morning hours to dispose of his few garden vegetables, and instead of finding his supper in waiting as usual, found only an empty, cheerless room from which all light and warmth had fled.

As he groped about in the dark, calling loudly for the absent one, a great fear came over him lest something serious had befallen her, but suddenly recalling the fact that she frequently availed herself of the opportunity to visit her friend in his absence, he calmly proceeded to prepare for himself a frugal repast, after which, in

case she did not return, he would go in quest of her.

Hastily swallowing a few mouthfuls, which well nigh choked him, he started out upon his fruitless errand. In vain he sought her, going from neighbor to neighbor, asking if she had been seen during the day, but each time he received a negative answer, until his pallid lips refused to repeat the question, and he returned to his humble fireside, there to meditate in secret upon the strange event.

It was evident that Margie had not been abducted, for each piece of her scanty wardrobe was likewise missing, and upon going to the little coffer which contained a few dollars, which were the proceeds of her flower-garden, and which she had carefully guarded as a means for the furtherance of her education, he found that also had been taken, together with a few trifles which from time to time had gladdened her heart as birthday gifts. This convinced him that Margie had gone of her own free will, but the reason for this rash step was enshrouded in mystery.

The sudden disappearance of the old gardener's daughter caused but little comment among the few homely working people to whom it became known. It was thought that she had sought some means of livelihood which was more to her liking than that of housekeeper for her rough old father; and doubtless had ran off in a fit of pique, and would soon find out her mistake and return to the humble home of her childhood. As the days flew by hope gave way to despair in the heart of old Michael, and he began to question in his own mind why the visits of the young master had ceased altogether, and longed for a repetition of the same, as a source which might prove of benefit to him in finding his daughter.

The cause of Arthur's long continued absence from the home of old Michael was attributable to the fact that he had been summoned to the sick bedside of a college chum, for whom he entertained the deepest regard. Seeing that his friend was hopelessly ill, and his death only a question of time, he decided

to remain until the end, knowing that his presence was a pleasure to the dying man.

When the last mournful duties were completed, he bade adieu to his grief-stricken friends and returned home, anxious to learn what changes had been wrought in his absence. He had acquitted himself creditably in the role of rejected lover previous to his departure, and was only too willing to go when called upon to visit his sick companion, knowing that ere his return the family of Mr. DuPere would have taken their departure. Accordingly the day after his arrival home he surreptitiously turned his footsteps in the direction of old Michael's habitation.

Without having been apprised of Margie's flight, he was illy prepared for the terrible news which awaited him. Arriving at his destination, he found the broken-hearted father bowed down with the great calamity that had befallen him. With uncontrollable grief the poor old man related the sad truth with which the reader is already acquainted.

Arthur listened attentively to the strange

sequel, wondering in his own mind what had induced this fair young girl to thus abandon her father and, what was more, her lover, and he decided at once to take steps to unravel this mystery.

On the following day, after having passed a sleepless night, Arthur again sought the home of the absent girl, wishing to gain farther particulars preparatory to beginning the search. As he came in sight of the cottage he was siezed with a strange sensation, and for some unknown reason his footsteps faltered, but he reluctantly pursued his way along the winding path, and ascended the rude steps where he had so often surprised poor innocent Margie.

He found the door closed and no signs of life without or within. A hasty knock brought no response, and he entered with a feeling that he was intruding upon the sanctity of a grief which he had no right to share.

Looking about him he saw no trace of any one having been astir during the early morning; everything appeared to be in its accus-

tomed place, while a death-like stillness prevailed, and without hesitation he slowly proceeded to the inner room which he knew to be the sleeping room of the old gardener. As he opened the door and looked in, his worst fears were realized; and his heart almost ceased to beat, for there, stretched upon a rude couch, he gazed upon the stiff, inanimate form of old Michael.

Approaching the lifeless body, which bore unmistakable evidence of having been dead for some hours, his curiosity was excited by the discovery that the thin, bony hands grasped an open letter or memorandum crumpled and yellow with age. With trembling fingers he took the paper from the cold, unresisting hand, and staggering to the farther end of the room seated himself and began eagerly to peruse it.

The face of Arthur Fairchild was a study as he hurriedly devoured the contents of this strange document, each line of which revealed a long-hidden secret that death alone had disclosed. With blanched cheek and bated

breath he carefully folded the mysterious paper, and placing it in an inside pocket, prepared to leave the spot that had once been the abiding place of her whose whereabouts he was determined to ascertain, though the search should be of endless duration.

Viewing the matter from his own standpoint, he felt that he alone was entitled to the secret that was imparted to him in this strange manner, and with a hurried glance at the face of the dead he passed out of the room closing and bolting the door behind him. With rapid footsteps he hastened to his father's home, where he acquainted the family of the finding of old Michael's body and the disappearance of the girl.

A sympathetic chord was touched in the hearts of Captain and Mrs. Fairchild, as they eagerly listened to the son's narrative and learned of the sudden taking off of the faithful old gardener, and many were the conjectures as to what had become of the girl.

It was soon noised abroad, however, that Margie had fled some days previous to the

death of her father, and it was conceded that her mysterious disappearance was in some measure the cause of old Michael's sudden demise.

With becoming solemnity the simple obsequies were performed, and the earthly remains of the faithful old servant were laid to rest in the village churchyard.

The unhappy frame of mind into which Arthur had fallen was easily accounted for by the father and mother, as a fitting sequel to the unfortunate termination of his *affaire d'amour* with Miss DuPere, consequently he was not questioned in regard to his despondency, but rather allowed the enjoyment which he apparently derived from undisturbed communion with his own thoughts.

Those who have suffered like disappointments know, that in the springtime of life such wounds heal quickly, providing the proper remedies are applied; hence, little fear was indulged that Arthur would not soon recover from the wound in-

flicted by Blanche DuPere's refusal of his hand.

Impelled by growing curiosity and the irresistible passion that was burning in his heart with increasing fervor, Arthur endeavored by such means as he possessed to ascertain when and where Margie was last seen, and to learn if possible whether she had confided the cause of her rash act to any of her associates.

All efforts in this direction were unavailing, and with a sad and heavy heart the grief-stricken young man recalled the last interview with his betrothed, when with child-like faith and trust she had eagerly listened to his avowals of love and constancy. How readily she had submitted herself to his guidance! And then, as if to fortify himself against the demoralizing doubts and fears that at times took possession of him, he quietly unfolded and re-read the mysterious letter which served as a stimulus to future action; for within those lines he found a balm for his inexpressible anguish—

a sweet hope, that should he succeed in finding his lost treasure, all objections to his union with one of such humble origin would be easily overcome, and yet he trembled with fearful apprehension as he clung to this yellow bit of parchment so hallowed by associations.

## CHAPTER VII.

### IN THE CARLTON HOME.

Mrs. Carlton sat in her cozy boudoir one afternoon, leisurely perusing the columns of a daily paper.

"I have been scanning the numerous advertisements in today's paper in the hope of finding something of a satisfactory nature in the line of housemaids," said that lady to her husband, who had just entered the room.

"And with what success? my dear," responded kind Mr. Carlton, as he tenderly embraced his wife, whose sweet, pathetic face he always declared reminded him of the "Sistine Madonna."

"Rather discouraging I must confess, as I find none with references, so I am about determined to engage the young person who applied here yesterday for a situation. She appeared like a nice honest girl, yet I dislike to take a domestic into my service without

some knowledge of their capability, disposition and general character; but then one can never be certain what attributes they possess until they have been put to the test."

"Where and when are you to have an interview with the young person referred to?" questioned the husband, as donning dressing-gown and slippers he seated himself in his easy chair.

"She promised to return this afternoon or evening for an answer, and if I am any judge of human nature she will keep her word, for her face bore the impress of truthfulness and sincerity."

"Well, my dear, I hope and trust that your ability to read servant girls at sight may not prove a delusion, but I am slightly incredulous, you know."

"But there she is now, coming through the gate, you dear, doubting Thomas," laughingly interrupted Mrs. Carlton; "so please excuse me while I go and have a talk with her."

After a brief absence Mrs. Carlton returned

to the library with the pleasing intelligence that the preliminaries were all arranged satisfactorily and she believed she had succeeded in finding a suitable addition to her household, and one that would prove herself worthy of respect and confidence, "for," said she to her husband persuasively, "this young girl seems more suitable for a lady's companion than for common domestic service."

"Be not over-confident, my good wife," rejoined the husband, whose past experience prohibited the possibility of his sharing his wife's enthusiasm; "still let us hope she may be capable of rendering the service of which you stand so greatly in need."

So saying, the husband and wife settled themselves for a quiet evening, each in turn reading to the other from some of their favorite authors. Mrs. Carlton was a beautiful woman, scarcely past middle age, slight and graceful of figure, with an abundance of pale-brown hair, the silvery threads of which, together with the fixed lines about the mouth and the sad, far-away look in the large dark

eyes, revealed a tale of mental suffering that time had failed to wholly obliterate. Resignation is not forgetfulness, and were we permitted to wander in the garden of the heart we might find many rare and tender flowers which long since would have withered, faded and vanished from sight, were they not moistened by the dews of unshed tears. What a kind provision of nature that we are forbidden to draw aside the veil of the future, or live over beyond a certain limit, the half-forgotten miseries of the past!

The quiet and well-regulated household of the Carltons was made none the less attractive by the advent of the new domestic, if so she may be called, for in reality she was a gentle, winsome creature, who, while at the outset performed the menial service of maid of all work, soon proved herself worthy a more exalted position, and although ever willing to assist in any of the household duties, was in truth my "lady's maid." Even good Mr. Carlton was compelled to admit that the unerring womanly instinct of

his estimable wife was able to discover hidden virtues in strange young women which were veiled from the eye of ordinary masculinity.

As time wore away the young girl became an important factor in the home of her adoption, until at last she was regarded as indispensable to her gentle benefactress, who had so kindly given her a home with no knowledge of her former life, character or condition.

As Mr. Carlton entered the library one bright afternoon, he found his wife eagerly devouring the contents of an open letter which she held in her hand.

"Well, well, husband mine, what do you think has happened to our old friends, the DuPeres?"

The gentlemen thus addressed declared his inefficiency in the art of mind-reading, and anxiously awaited an explanation of this unusual enthusiasm on the part of his dignified wife.

"Well, then, listen; here is a letter from

Mrs. DuPere, in which she informs us of the fact that Blanche is to be married to a Mr. Mortimer—Ralph Mortimer—an old friend of the family, and will sail for Europe soon after. The wedding is to take place on the third of next month, and we are bidden to participate in celebrating the event. There's no end to the preparations that are being made to give the young heiress a becoming send off such as the occasion demands."

"Ralph Mortimer?" So then Blanche failed to capture the handsome son of that Captain Fairchild, whom everybody knows was her father's choice, and supposedly hers as well. Aha! we must not count too surely on catching the rabbit because the hounds are after him," laughingly rejoined the husband.

"Yes, no doubt they desired at one time that she should wed young Fairchild; in fact, rumor has it that the visit they paid them last summer was expressly for the purpose of throwing the young people together. Well, Blanche is a beautiful and accomplished

young lady, and I hope this union may bring peace and happiness in its train;" sighed the good wife, as a shade of sadness clouded her sweet, pale face, and she brushed away the silent tear which a retrospective view of her own girlhood and early married life was sure to produce.

While Mr. and Mrs. Carlton were discussing the approaching marriage of the daughter of their old friend, they were wholly unconscious of the presence of a third party, who had become an unwilling listener to their conversation. Entering the library unobserved through the half-open door, a young girl timidly awaited an opportunity to address a few words to her indulgent mistress. At the mention of young Fairchild's name, in connection with that of Miss DuPere, she suddenly turned pale, and with a low, half suppressed moan, fled from the room. The other occupants being deeply engrossed in contemplation of the coming event gave no heed to the sound of retreating footsteps as they hurried along the corridor leading to

the servants' apartment. What was the surprise of Mrs. Carlton, a few hours later, when upon being hastily summoned to the little room occupied by her maid, to find the latter stretched upon her bed in a state of mental excitement bordering on delirium.

All night she lay moaning and tossing from side to side, muttering incoherently, and apparently unconscious that kind friends were ministering to her every need, and anxiously awaiting the return of reason, taking advantage of the few lucid moments in which to question her as to the cause of her sudden illness. No satisfactory answer was given, and at the approach of early dawn a physician was called who pronounced the malady brain fever.

For several weeks Mrs. Carlton was unremitting in her endeavors to nurse the sick girl back to life. During the long watches of the night she sat by her bedside, tenderly holding the little burning hands of the sufferer, for whom she cherished almost a maternal regard; for the helpless condition of

this poor friendless girl had awakened in her benefactress all the sweet feminine instincts which characterize a true and noble woman.

Nearly two months had elapsed and the chill winds of November gave warning of the near approach of winter. The crisis had passed, and as the good Doctor came to pay his accustomed visit, he was able to assure Mrs. Carlton that her little charge had passed the period of danger and could now be pronounced upon the highway of recovery.

"But," said he, by way of compliment, "she owes her life to your untiring care and devotion, rather than to my skill, for I had exhausted all the resources known to my profession and was simply letting nature and your ministration do the rest."

"Well, Doctor," blushingly replied Mrs. Carlton, "we care not to whom is awarded the praise, since the life of our patient is spared, but since you are too modest to share the honors with me, let us attribute the cure to the unerring hand of Providence, for surely I feel that my share in the good work

deserves but little credit, since motives of a selfish nature prompted my every act. I have become quite dependent upon this young girl, whose place in my heart and home could not well be filled by another, and now, since I came so near losing her, shall attach more value to her many excellent qualities than ever before."

Listening to their kind words of praise offered in her behalf, a sweet wistful expression came over the countenance of the invalid, and with a weary, half-sickly smile, she turned her face away, gazing off at the far-away hills already whitened with early snow, as if unwilling to recall an experience, the remembrance of which filled her soul with horror.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A VISITOR.

It was the night before Christmas. Outside a blinding storm was raging with unabated fury. The wind blew with terrific force against the closely-barred shutters, sweeping along in fitful gusts through the thick branches of the tall, leafless trees, which were writhing and twisting as if being tortured into submission by the relentless hand of the storm king. The wildness of the scene without gave all the more warmth and glow to the cheerful blaze of the traditional yule-log that lay across the carefully polished andirons, standing like night sentinels on either side of the broad, old-fashioned fireplace.

"What a fearful tempest we are having on this Christmas Eve! and it seems to be increasing every moment," remarked Mrs. Carlton, as she listened to the shrieking blast, which caused an involuntary

shudder; and, gathering her bright knitted shawl about her shoulders, she drew near the fire.

In response to her ring a servant entered, when she ordered tea served in the library. Scarcely had she given the command when a loud peal at the door-bell arrested her attention, and fearing the inclemency of the weather had driven some belated wayfarer to seek shelter beneath her roof, she obeyed the summons in person, rather than subject the unknown visitor to the tardiness of a domestic.

Hastily opening the door, she stood face to face with a tall figure clad in a rich fur coat and muffled so closely about the head and face as to reveal only a pair of eager eyes, which peered through the darkness at the bright firelight within.

"Pardon my intrusion," said a deep, rich voice, "but may I ask if Major Carlton lives here?"

An affirmative reply brought a smile of satisfaction to the face of the stranger, as he

hesitated, apparently awaiting an invitation to enter. Only too glad of the opportunity afforded to offer hospitality on such a rough, boisterous night, Mrs. Carlton kindly bade him come in.

Shaking the snow from his outer garments, he obeyed with alacrity, after having deposited his superfluous wrappings upon the hall table. Quickly entering the neatly-furnished apartments, he walked directly to the wide-open fireplace, where he stood rubbing his hands together gleefully, as he held them over the bright-glowing blaze.

Bidding him be seated, Mrs. Carlton repaired to an adjacent room, in quest of her husband, to whom she announced the arrival of the unknown guest. Hastening to the room, followed by his good wife, Mr. Carlton was surprised as well as delighted to meet the son of an old and valued friend whom he had not seen for many years.

After a cordial greeting, the kind host turned abruptly to his wife, and laughingly asked if she had no word of welcome for one

who had braved the fury of the elements in order to give them the unexpected pleasure of meeting an old acquaintance.

"Pardon my stupidity, and seeming lack of hospitality," blushingly replied Mrs. Carlton; "but I must plead guilty to the inexcusable ignorance of not knowing to whom we are indebted for the honor of this visit."

"Indeed, I see that you do not recognize our visitor," responded the husband, "so please allow me to introduce Mr. Arthur Fairchild, whom you met many years ago, while on a brief visit at the home of Capt. Fairchild. Perhaps it is only fair to add that, were it not for the striking resemblance between father and son, I should hardly have recognized him myself."

An interchange of greetings followed, after which the kind hostess, ever mindful of the comfort of her guests, hastened to see that a few substantials were added to the simple repast already ordered. The brief delay caused by this slight change in the menu was hardly noticeable, so agreeably

was the time passed in friendly conversation.

The welcome sound of approaching footsteps announced the fact that the refreshments were forthcoming, when at the same time a slight young girl appeared, bearing a large tray laden with sweet home-made bread, honey, waffles and cold meats. A tiny teapot, snugly ensconced in a little old-fashioned tea-cosey, completed the lay-out, and as Mrs. Carlton arose to receive the tempting viands, she was startled by the death-like pallor that mantled the face of the half-fainting girl.

With a wild, frightened stare, she stood there like a marble statue, while her pale, trembling lips refused to utter the mute appeal directed toward their distinguished guest. A quick meaning glance passed between husband and wife as they looked inquiringly from one to the other.

All unconscious of the significance of this strange pantomime, the young man was the first to break the painful silence that ensued, and rising to his feet he slowly walked to

the shrinking form of the half-prostrate girl, who was clinging to the arm of a chair for support.

Extending his hand, which she refused to accept, he exclaimed: "My mission is ended! I have found her at last!" "Margie," he continued, in a low, husky voice, "have you no word of welcome for me? Speak, I beseech you!"

She raised her eyes to his, with a vacant, meaningless stare, but her pallid lips made no response.

"Speak to me, Margie," he pleaded, I can endure your silence no longer."

With a sudden start, she sprang to her feet, and casting an appealing glance at her kind benefactress, as if imploring her confidence and protection, uttered a low cry, as she rushed from the room.

The young man made a quick, involuntary movement, as if to follow her, when Mr. Carlton stepped forth and placed his hand gently upon his shoulder, begging him to be seated.

He dropped into a chair, and burying his face in his hands, remained motionless for several moments; then, as he suddenly awakened to a realizing sense of the awkward position in which he was thrown, he summoned courage to speak.

Rising to his feet, he drew up his tall, manly figure to its full height, and folding his arms across his breast, attempted to make a fitting apology for his strange behavior.

"Mr. Carlton," he began, "as a friend of my father, I beg that you will pardon this seemingly unwarranted invasion upon your home circle; and, believe me, that however much I have merited your reproach, I am none the less a man of honor, and do not deserve the censure that this strange scene might justify. When you are made aware of the importance of my errand here; when my motives are stripped of the dark mystery that enshroud them, I shall not appear the guilty culprit that my conduct, and that of the innocent, guileless girl, who is doubtless

this moment sharing my ignominy, would lead you to believe. The unparalleled scene, which you and your good wife have just witnessed, should be explained without delay, but my emotions are beyond my control at this moment, and I most humbly beg that you will excuse me from entering upon a subject, the details of which overwhelm me with anxiety, fear and dismay."

"Calm yourself, my young friend," replied Mr. Carlton, in a trembling voice, "and allow me to assure you that, deeply as I deplore the necessity which compels me to regard your conduct with grave suspicion, I shall reserve my verdict until such time as you shall see fit to honor me with your entire confidence. That this friendless girl should have been subjected to treatment at your hands, unbecoming a gentleman, and unworthy the son of my old-time friend, seems incredible; yet, the extraordinary scene that has just been enacted, leads me to fear that somewhere, hidden beneath this dark mys-

tery, lurks an evil for which there should be speedy atonement."

"My dear sir," began the youth, as he stood with blanched cheek and quivering lip, "your generosity is only equaled by my sense of humiliation, but knowing that a kindly hearing of my simple story will free me from censure, and convert your justly-founded suspicion into respect and sympathy, I submit to the reproach which your words imply, and with your permission will take leave of yourself and your good wife until such time as I may be able to prove myself worthy of your respect and esteem."

Mr. Carlton was deeply moved at having thus wounded the feelings of his guest, and begged to recall any undue severity which might have betrayed itself in the first flush of excitement; but at the same time, feeling that the unusual experience through which he had passed was in itself sufficient cause to warrant the rebuke which his words had implied.

"My dear young friend," replied Mr.

Carlton, "I cannot allow you to quit my fireside upon such a wild, boisterous night as this, and believe me when I say that, however much appearances may be against you, I am in no wise disposed to brand you as a criminal before I have heard your argument in self-defense."

"Thank you! thank you!" cried the youth, eagerly, as he grasped the proffered hand of his kind-hearted host, which he warmly pressed, adding in a tone of deep humility, as he looked him squarely in the face, unflinchingly, "That you should regard me with suspicions of the gravest nature is but natural under the circumstances, but allow me to assure you, sir, that I have been guilty of nothing whatever that should merit your displeasure, much less your contempt, and ere the setting of tomorrow's sun you shall be acquainted with facts which will raise the dark cloud of doubt and suspicion which now envelopes me."

The earnest words thus uttered inspired a certain degree of confidence in the mind of

the listener, and with a few reassuring remarks on the part of the host, the two separated for the night, the young man gladly seeking the much needed rest which weary nature demanded.

Mrs. Carlton had quitted the room soon after Margie had taken her departure, going to the sleeping apartment of the latter, whom she found in a state of mind truly alarming. She deemed it a sacred duty to ascertain the cause of the strange emotion which betrayed itself the moment the unfortunate girl was brought in contact with young Fairchild, and with true womanly delicacy she began adroitly to question her as to the manner in which she had made the acquaintance of the young man, and what had been the nature of their former relations.

The poor girl lay in a half-unconscious state, moaning pitiously as she tossed about, muttering a few incoherent words which were anything but satisfactory to her kind benefactress. Suddenly unclosing her eyes she sat upright on the bed, and burying her face

in her hands, rocked to and fro in a state of intense excitement, while burning tears trickled through her clenched fingers.

"Oh, why did he follow me here, to persecute and torment me, when I was trying to forget the bitterness of the past!" sobbed the girl, as if communing with her own unhappy thoughts. "My dear Mrs. Carlton," she continued, addressing herself directly to that lady, "I am innocent of any evil either in word, thought or deed, but this man has ruined my life and driven me to despair."

"Margie, my poor child, tell me the story of your cruel wrongs. Can you not confide in me? I shall defend and protect you from all harm, whatever your past history may reveal, for I believe you have been sinned against; but speak, child, and tell me what this all means."

"Oh, I can't! I can't!" replied the blushing girl, unable to bear the humiliating confession which she was half persuaded to make. "Tomorrow—some other

time—when I can collect my senses, I will tell you all, but not now—not now!"

Seeing the excitement under which the girl was laboring, and the agony which her words inflicted, Mrs. Carlton refrained from farther questioning, and with soothing words and gentle caresses succeeded in quieting the girl, whom she kissed affectionately as she bade her a kindly good-night, telling her to be hopeful and seek to bury her sorrows in the sweet knowledge of her own innocence.

Going directly to the library she found her husband pacing up and down the room in a state of great agitation.

"I hardly know what to think of this perplexing business," said he, as he endeavored to appear calm in the presence of his wife, "but to say that it places me in a painfully embarrassing position but feebly expresses it."

"Well," rejoined the latter, "there is a deep mystery connected with this very unhappy affair, which I fear when cleared away will place Mr. Fairchild in a rather unenviable light. Margie has unquestionably

suffered a cruel grievance at the hands of this man, and the least we can do is to sift the matter to the very foundation, let the guilt fall upon whom it may. Her extreme youth and utter helplessness appeal strongly to my sympathies, and I can only hope and pray that my worst fears may prove groundless."

"I know that appearances are very much against him," remarked the husband, "and yet, he protests his innocence in such emphatic terms that I am constrained to trust in his honor as a gentleman, until such time as I am convinced that my confidence has been abused."

The subject continued to be discussed until the lateness of the hour admonished them to seek repose, preparatory to the interview which was promised on the morrow.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ARTHUR EXPLAINS.

It was Christmas Day. The storm of the preceding night had subsided, and the cold, steel-blue of the morning sky broke through the fitful clouds that were giving way to admit the rays of sunlight which were struggling for supremacy.

Arthur awakened with a violent headache. Attempting to rise he fell back upon the pillow, exhausted, but summoning strength he slowly proceeded to dress himself. His simple toilet completed, he glanced at the mirror which revealed a pale, earnest face, unclouded by the dark phantoms of shame or remorse. Listening to the sound of footsteps moving about, he drew aside the curtains and looked out, realizing that he had slept far into the morning hours.

After some hesitation, he slowly descended the winding staircase, and passing through

a long hall, entered the family sitting-room.

Mr. Carlton arose and extended his hand in friendly salutation, which the young man eagerly grasped as a token of reconciliation and restored confidence. As the two sat conversing upon commonplace topics, Mrs. Carlton entered the room, and after passing the compliments of the day, announced to her husband that breakfast was waiting.

Her manner was somewhat cool and dignified, as she quietly led the way to the little breakfast-room, where the three sat down to a daintily-spread table, illy disguising the fact that a feeling of unrest was prevalent, yet manifesting a mutual desire to avoid any allusion to the cause.

Arthur was conscious that his presence was imposing restraint upon his table companions, and hastily swallowing a few mouthfuls rose to depart, begging to be excused upon the flimsy plea of sudden indisposition. Going out upon the veranda he made a few rapid turns in the crisp morning air, in the

meantime silently meditating upon the manner least embarrassing, in which to introduce the painful subject which engrossed his every thought.

Suddenly his attention was called to an adjacent window, the shutter of which was being rudely shaken by the wind. He was startled from his reverie by seeing pressed closely to the window pane the pale, haggard face of the girl who had fled from his presence the preceding night, like a hunted deer seeking refuge from the hand of its would-be destroyer.

With a terrified look she withdrew from the window, leaving the young man immovably fixed with a steadfast gaze in the direction of her hiding-place. Her sudden disappearance revealed the fact that she was still resolute in her determination to avoid meeting him, and, goaded to desperation by this cruel treatment from the girl he so madly loved, he resolved to ascertain without further delay the cause of this incomprehensible state of affairs.

Hastily entering the room occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Carlton, who had been conversing together in a low voice, Arthur abruptly demanded that Margie be summoned to their presence at once, announcing in a brief manner his readiness to make a voluntary statement of the cause which made him an unwelcome guest under their roof.

Mrs. Carlton demurred slightly at this unexpected proposition to have Margie brought into the presence of the young man, pleading for excuse her extreme sensitiveness and peculiar nervous condition; but Arthur was obdurate and declared his intention to at once take measure to vindicate his honor and remove the unjust suspicions which had sullied his heretofore stainless reputation.

Mr. Carlton's keen sense of justice led him to act as champion to one whom he believed to be guiltless of any willful transgression against the girl; hence, with quiet dignity he assured his wife that Mr. Fairchild's request was but natural under the circum-

stances, and although she was doubtless unfitted for such a trying ordeal, he thought that justice to all demanded that she could be allowed the opportunity to defend herself by denying or affirming, as the case might be, the truth of what Arthur had to say.

Mrs. Carlton accepted the situation without further hesitancy and went herself in quest of the object of her kind solicitude.

A few moments delay brought Margie, pale and trembling into the presence she so much dreaded, and with down-cast eyes she seated herself close beside Mrs. Carlton to whose hand she clung with childlike faith in this supreme moment of her life. Arthur gazed in pity, mingled with admiration at the shrinking form of the frightened girl, who in return raised her tear-stained eyes to his with an appealing look which caused a bright crimson flush to spread over his dark determined face. Rising to his feet in deference to the new arrivals he summoned strength to begin the strange story with which the reader is already acquainted.

He opened the subject by a brief narration of the simple relations which had long existed between his family and the father of the young girl. His earnest manner intensified as he passed from one incident to another in rapid succession, relating in as brief terms as possible the few uninteresting details of his life at college, which necessitated his absence from home for some years; of his return to the parental roof, and his father's kind indulgence and subsequent anxiety for his welfare and success in life; and finally of the sentiment which he had cherished for the old gardener's daughter, adding that he was fully aware what the world would say and that his parents would naturally regard such a union as undesirable, but that so-called unequal matches were not an uncommon thing, and that for himself he felt that it was a subject of self-congratulation that he had been so fortunate as to gain the priceless treasure of a true woman's love.

A brief pause ensued, in which Mrs. Carlton ventured to ask if he felt that it was

quite right to awaken feelings in the heart of an innocent, susceptible girl, which in all human probability she would never realize.

"That depends upon circumstances," he answered, flushing to the very roots of his hair. "And why not be realized? I claim the privilege of indulging my own taste and inclination in the matter of choosing a wife, and if I prefer a sweet, pure girl of humble origin, to a soulless, capricious butterfly of the world, I think my good taste should be considered above criticism.

"I loved this girl with all the strength of vigorous manhood. I love her still, and in seeking to find her as I have done, alone and unaided for the past three months, I was actuated by the purest of motives, together with the unalterable purpose to ascertain, if possible, the cause of her sudden flight, after having accepted the avowed passion of one who offered her the homage of a true, manly heart, and gave her a place in his affections which I aver belong to her and none other. Strange as it may

seem, I unblushingly confess that this girl inspired a sentiment in my heart which had lain dormant until awakened by the magic power that rules the destiny of all mankind.

"After having followed various clues to her whereabouts, all of which only resulted in disappointment, I accidently learned that a young woman answering her description was staying in this immediate neighborhood, and upon my arrival here, found no difficulty in locating the object of my search.

"I am here with the avowed purpose of unravelling this mysterious affair from beginning to end, and am shocked and grieved to find that my laudable efforts have met with illy concealed suspicion and unmerited reproach. I am now ready to meet any and all charges detrimental to the honor of a gentleman, and wish to say that my former relations with this girl are open to investigation."

Having thus delivered himself, he stood wiping the beads of perspiration from his brow, awaiting any accusation which might be brought against him. Mr. and Mrs. Carl-

ton looked at each other inquiringly, and then all eyes were centered upon the young girl, who, with downcast eyes, sat very still, never having changed her position during the time that young Fairchild was speaking.

Mrs. Carlton was the first to break the awkward silence, and in a firm but gentle voice requested Margie to make a statement of her case, providing she had anything to say.

The girl gave a sudden start, as if awakening from a dream, and looking from one to the other, buried her face in her hands, and gave way to a violent fit of weeping. For several moments her slight figure swayed back and forth, while her sobs were loud and convulsive. Then she became more calm and brushing away her tears sat motionless as if in deep thought.

"Do not, from a mistaken sense of duty, seek to conceal anything," enjoined the young man, "but whatever revelation you have to make let it be made at once, for any attempt to prevaricate will be worse than madness. I have endeavored to draw the

sketch as true to nature as possible and am waiting for you to throw in the lights and shadows in order to complete the picture."

When he had finished speaking, Margie, with a strong effort at self-control, gathered courage to respond and in a voice choked with emotion, she said:

"Mr. Fairchild, all that you have said is undoubtedly true, save the fact that you ever cherished one thought for me other than that of sympathy for my wretched weakness in believing that the son of Captain Fairchild could love the daughter of his father's gardener. I was a poor, friendless, motherless girl, unaccustomed to the ways of grand people, and would to heaven that I had ever remained so; but when you offered me kindness, sympathy and love, I could not find it in my heart to refuse such coveted blessings.

"I believed you, and trusted you, blind foolish child that I was, until you gave me proof of your faithlessness and treachery. Not until I heard you with my own ears declare your love for the beautiful Miss

DuPere, and saw you kneeling at her proud feet, imploring her to accept the place in your heart which you had already sworn was mine, did I realize how dear you were to me; but when I could no longer doubt that I was cast aside like a broken toy; that all your vows of love for me were but false, cruel mockery; that I was simply the object of your caprice, it was then that my poor heart turned to stone and with vengeance in my soul, I left my humble home and dear old father, rather than ever set my eyes upon your false face again.

"I left all and fled from the scenes which would ever have haunted me with the bitter recollection that I was the object of your scorn and ridicule. This I could not endure, and now that I have found shelter beneath the roof of these kind friends I beg you to leave me in my humiliation, and do not torture me beyond what I can bear.

"The truthfulness of my statement you will hardly deny, as my proof is abundant, as you are aware, so please allow me to leave

your presence, as I have nothing further to say in defense of my conduct or in your justification."

With a look of calm forbearance she arose to depart, when Arthur sprang to her side, and gathering her in his arms, while his whole frame shook with happy emotion, he imprinted a hearty kiss upon her trembling lips. With a cry of resentment she struggled to extricate herself, while Mr. and Mrs. Carlton stood in mute astonishment, scarcely knowing what was the proper course for them to pursue under such extraordinary circumstances.

Arthur was happy and exultant in the thought that a brief explanation would clear away the misapprehension which had inflicted so much pain upon the misguided girl, and trusted his own powers of eloquence to establish his complete vindication and exonerate him from the guilt which her truthful words would fix upon him. With a smile on his face he took her hand, which she withdrew instantly, and with gentle firmness bade her

be seated, while he assured Mr. Carlton that a grave misunderstanding had subjected him to all this unpleasantness.

"Margie," he asked, eagerly, "is this all?" Is it simply my relation to Miss DuPere that has caused all your unhappiness, and forced you to abandon the man who offered you his life-long devotion, his great, boundless love?"

"All?" she slowly repeated; "could there be anything worse than to know that your vows were false, that you had been so cruel and unkind to one whose childish imaginations had clothed you with all the virtues belonging to a noble manhood? Indeed, this is *all*, and *little* as it may seem to you, it is everything to me, for it has taken all the joy out of my life and left me but one thing to hope for, and that is an early death."

Having thus answered him, she again gave way to an uncontrollable fit of weeping, while Mrs. Carlton endeavored to calm and console her with kind words of love and sympathy, assuring her that she was laboring

under some fearful misapprehension, which she felt convinced Mr. Fairchild could satisfactorily explain. When her paroxysm of grief had subsided, Arthur gave her a look of entreaty, earnestly begging that she would be calm and listen to what he had to say.

"Margie, my dear girl," he continued, "will you believe what I am about to relate? If not, then she who was Miss DuPere will be called upon to add her testimony in corroboration of the truthfulness of my statement. What you witnessed at the time that I proposed marriage to Miss DuPere, was enough to brand me with infamy and drive you to madness; yet, as I recall the circumstance and realize by what motives I was actuated, I am constrained to deny the validity of circumstantial evidence in whatever form it may be presented.

"It is an indisputable fact, that the parents of the young lady, as well as those of myself, were very desirous that the two families should be united through the matrimonial alliance of their respective children,

and as Blanche and myself were the only possibilities through which such a union could be consumated, we were summoned to act in accordance with their wishes; but an obstruction was encountered at the outset, for with characteristic wilfullness we objected to being coërced into a relationship which was mutually distasteful to both, hence a means of escape was a matter of necessity.

"To accomplish this object without doing violence to the feelings of our parents was our earnest desire. Accordingly I availed myself of the first opportunity to present this unfortunate affair to Miss DuPere, with the hope that her pure womanly instinct might suggest some plan which would satisfy the demands of my paternal ancestor, and at the same time relieve me from the entanglement into which I had been irresistibly drawn. Miss DuPere never entertained other feelings for me than those of ordinary friendship, while the sentiments I cherished for her were purely reciprocal in their nature and nothing more.

"At the time to which you refer I had sought an opportunity, when undisturbed we might discuss the subject, and I would acquaint the young lady, if she were not already aware, of the existing state of affairs, and beg her aid in devising some means to put an end to the embarrassment. I found, upon broaching the subject, that she too was being annoyed by the project aforesaid, for be it known at that very time she was already engaged to the man whose wife she now is, while I was bound by the sacred ties of betrothal to wed another.

"When we had fairly discussed the matter, it was Miss DuPere herself who proposed that the quickest way to end the whole affair was for me to offer myself to her in marriage, and that her refusal to accept my proposal would afford me the opportunity to truthfully aver that I had complied with my father's wishes, and that my suit had been rejected. This would leave me free to carry out my avowed purpose, which was to marry the girl whom I loved,

no matter what barriers stood in the way.

"Accordingly, I performed my part in the burlesque and received the emphatic refusal which I sought. This is the sequel to that little piece of deception which I practiced, and while it caused much merriment to Miss DuPere and myself at the time, it has brought much misery as you well know. While I deeply regret my foolish act, and its sad consequences, I did feel that the end would justify the means, and now that Miss DuPere is happily married to the man of her choice, I shall not hesitate to acquaint my parents of the duplicity which I used when urged to sue for the hand of a lady in whom I had no special interest. I have finished my story and await your verdict, for before high heaven, I affirm that what I have related is the solemn truth."

During the narration of the above, Margie sat very quiet, while the hot blood mounted to her cheeks at intervals and then receded, leaving her pale as a marble statue. As the last words died on the young man's lips, she

turned, looked him full in the face, and with a low cry sprang toward him, exclaiming between laughter and tears:

"And you never loved Miss DuPere, and you meant to fulfill your promise to me, and you loved me as you said? Oh, Mr. Fairchild, this happiness is more than I deserve—I, who have so cruelly wounded you—forgive, forgive!" she sobbed, as she rushed into his outstretched arms while he in turn covered her lips with passionate kisses.

Mr. and Mrs. Carlton were greatly agitated and could hardly comprehend the situation all at once, yet both felt relieved at the assurance that their suspicions and doubts as to the integrity of young Fairchild were groundless, and that the unhappy affair had terminated in such a pleasant manner. After shaking hands and extending congratulations to the lovers, they withdrew from the room, feeling that their presence might be undesirable in the first blissful hour of reconciliation.

When Margie had so far recovered herself as to be able to collect her thoughts, she eagerly asked after her father, whom she had almost forgotten in her ecstatic joy. At the mention of his name a dark cloud passed over Arthur's face, which betokened evil, and suddenly rising he walked to the window and looked out, as if seeking to evade a direct answer to the apparently perplexing question. His strange manner filled the young girl with alarm, and hastening to his side, she grasped his hands, exclaiming:

"What is it? Tell me, pray, at once. Do not keep me in suspense!"

Arthur drew her to him tenderly, endeavoring to calm her fears by gentle words and fond caresses, but she saw that something unusual was occupying his mind.

"Oh, Arthur!" she cried, "do not tell me that anything has happened to my father!"

"Be quiet, little girl," he replied, "and we will talk of this later. We must not allow one shadow to cloud the happiness of this hour."

But Margie was importunate in her entreaties to know the worst, and insisted that he should tell her what mystery he was attempting to conceal.

"Well, then, Margie, let me say that I have a strange tale to tell you, the revelation of which may cause you great pain, but you will not shrink from any sacrifice, however great, since you have the strength of my devotion to sustain you, will you Margie?"

"I can endure anything, save the knowledge that my inexcusable rashness has produced other than temporary grief to my dear old father, for while I felt very keenly the great wrong I had done him, I was secretly planning to acquaint him of my whereabouts without betraying my hiding-place to those whom I desired should never see my face again."

The young man winced under these words, but suddenly recalling the provocation which inspired them, reproached himself rather than his companion, for having unwittingly placed himself in a position calculated to

destroy the confidence of the woman he loved.

"Hush, darling, and let no allusions to the past cast its dark shadow over the present; let us forget all, in the sweet consciousness that an unclouded future lies before us, the enjoyment of which nothing can prevent, save the hand of the destroying angel."

"But my father, Arthur, tell me of my father!" pleaded the anxious girl.

"Margie, if you are prepared to listen to that which it will sooner or later be my sad and painful duty to tell you, then we will not delay one moment longer, but with your permission I desire that your kind benefactors shall hear what I have to relate, as it is meet and right that those who have sheltered you in your dark hours of affliction should continue to share your joys and sorrows."

"Anything would be preferable to this awful suspense," cried the frightened girl with faltering voice, for she was now confident that some great grief was in store for her, and with an effort at self-control, she

calmly awaited the disclosures about to be made, which seemed to threaten shipwreck to her new-found happiness.

Summoning Mr. and Mrs. Carlton from the adjoining room, Arthur at once proceeded to break the sad news as gently as possible, by first acquainting Margie with the fact that a mystery enshrouded her life that could not be solved.

"Do not talk to me of mysteries, I beseech you!" cried the impatient girl; "but tell me that my father lives, and that I may be granted the opportunity to make reparation for the cruel wrong I did in deserting one who loved me, simply because I was too cowardly to bear the sting of being deserted by the one I loved."

"Margie, you ask for the assurance that your father lives, but believe me when I tell you that I am unable to give you that assurance, for I do not know to whom belongs the proud distinction of being your father."

Taking from his pocket the yellow crumpled slip of paper, he held it up as evi-

dence of the truthfulness of what he was about to relate.

"That Michael O'Connor was no kin of yours I have positive proof, as this strange document will bear witness."

With a low moan, Margie's head fell upon her breast, and covering her face with both hands she sobbed convulsively. Recovering her self-control, she begged him to continue, assuring him that she was prepared for any revelation he had to make. Mrs. Carlton drew the trembling girl closer as she listened to the verification of what appeared to rob an innocent victim of even her poor birthright.

Without hesitation Arthur proceeded with the information that the paper which he held as a living witness of the truth of what he was saying was received by himself direct from the hand of Michael O'Connor. The contents in brief were as follows:

"When I seated myself and began to eagerly peruse this memorandum, imagine my surprise when I learned from these few

almost illegible lines that the fair young girl to whom I was betrothed was not of the humble origin which I had supposed, but might be, for aught I knew, of ancestry superior to my own. This letter reveals the fact that many years ago—just how many I know not, as it bears no date—but suffice it to say that in the early married life of our faithful old gardener there came to his humble dwelling on a chill November night, a frail young woman claiming to be the mother of the girl baby whom she held in her arms. The young mother begged shelter for the night under the hospitable roof of Michael O'Connor and his good wife.

"On the morrow it was discovered that the stranger-guest was suffering from a serious malady, and upon summoning a physician it was ascertained that brain fever had claimed her as its victim. In the days of delirium which followed, she was faithfully cared for by these kind people; but medical skill and tender nursing were of no avail, and one week from the day on which she sought

shelter among strangers for herself and child, the spirit took its flight, and the body of an unknown woman was laid away in the village church-yard. No sorrowing friends were there to follow her remains to the silent tomb, save old Michael and his kind-hearted wife, who had endeavored during the few lucid moments of her illness to ascertain something of her past history, but nothing could be gathered from the dying woman's lips that threw any light upon the subject.

"Time passed on, and the dimpled girl-baby became an important factor in the home of her benefactors, who soon grew to love her with parental affection, and as no tidings ever reached them that would lead to the discovery of the child's parentage, they gladly adopted the little waif, giving to it the name of Margie, which name their own first-born and only child had borne during the few short months of its young life.

"And so it came to pass that 'little Margie' was known only as 'the old gardener's daughter.' This brief outline of the girl's

history had been written down by the wife of old Michael and carefully treasured up by the simple couple, thinking, no doubt, that some day they might learn to whom she belonged. Unquestionably they gave as little publicity to the matter as possible, in the fear that the child would be reclaimed and they be robbed of the one source from which they derived their greatest happiness.

"Upon taking up their abode in the neighborhood in which my father resided, and where a few years later the foster-mother died, no one suspected that the little orphan was other than the lawful daughter of Michael O'Connor; and now while I shrink from the details as to the manner in which I came in possession of this manuscript, it is, nevertheless, my solemn duty to acquaint you with all the facts connected with this unhappy affair.

"Returning from the bedside of a dying friend, where I had been suddenly called some two weeks previous, my first thought was given to the helpless girl, to whom I had

sworn allegiance, and fearful lest my absence had caused her needless anxiety, I hastened to apologize for my seeming neglect. Arriving at my destination I was shocked to learn that the object of my solicitude had suddenly disappeared, and that all efforts, thus far, had failed to reveal her whereabouts.

"Apprehensive that some great evil had befallen her, I began at once to devise some means that would enable me to unravel the mystery and lead to her recovery. On the following day I sought a second interview with the father of the missing girl, hoping to gather some new facts which might serve as a clew to aid me in prosecuting the search which I was about to begin. After repeated efforts to elicit some response from the sole occupant of this homely dwelling, I finally entered unbidden, and what was my horror and dismay to find there, stretched upon a narrow couch, the cold, lifeless body of Michael O'Connor, while his icy hand clutched this document, which I now sur-

render to you, Margie, as a legacy left by your foster-father."

"And here," said he, taking from his pocket a small parcel rolled in tissue paper, "is a portion of an infant's wardrobe, stained and yellow with age, that had been evidently wrapped around this precious relic as it lay upon the breast of the dead man;" and carefully pinned to the hem of the garment was a paper bearing the inscription—"This is the dress worn by our Margie the day she came to us."

During all this time Margie sat motionless as a graven image. Not a sound escaped her pallid lips, but with glittering eyes riveted upon the young man's face, she breathlessly awaited the conclusion of that strange narrative, each page of which revealed some startling fact in her life's history that she fain would have hidden from mortal eye. Not until her attention was called to the tiny bit of embroidered muslin, which perchance had been fashioned by her own mother's hand, did she seem conscious that a new life

had opened up before her, and that henceforth she must face the world as a nameless foundling of doubtful parentage, all of which filled her soul with unconquerable dread.

Mrs. Carlton, who had listened with marked attention, evidently weighing each word as it fell from young Fairchild's lips, now arose, pale and trembling, and with an almost superhuman effort at self-control, stretched forth her hand in the act of taking the garment for closer inspection. A sudden movement on the part of Margie interposed, and as if all unconscious of the presence of her mistress, the young girl seized the article from the hands of her lover and burying her face in the soft folds burst into a fit of weeping.

The copious flow of tears soon brought relief to her over-strained nerves, and with gentle touch she spread the little gown across her knees, carefully smoothing out the wrinkles, as she closely examined each seam and gather, as if to penetrate the hidden

secret which this inanimate bit of fabric alone could tell.

"Oh, my mother! my darling mother!" sobbed the unhappy girl, "would that you could speak from your sainted home on high and clear up the dark mystery that must forever hang over the wretched life of your unfortunate child!"

Looking at the garment more closely, she repeated half to herself, as she held the dainty fabric in her trembling fingers: "Surely this is fine texture, and the embroidery is hand-work, while the soft rich lace about the neck and sleeves would indicate that my mother was not always a penniless outcast, however low and fallen her ultimate condition may have appeared."

Respect for the girl's sorrow and humiliation demanded silence on the part of those who were called upon to witness the deep grief into which a knowledge of her early history had thrown her; and as all three stood with bowed heads and eyes suffused with tears, they were startled by a low cry

as holding up the cherished relic to the light, she exclaimed:

"Oh, see! Here is a name written in indelible ink, but which is well-nigh obliterated; so indistinct has it become that I can hardly decipher it, still I can almost spell the name, the first letter of which is—is——"

Before she had time to pronounce the words which faltered on her lips, Mrs. Carlton, unable to control herself longer, grasped the arm of the excited girl, and wresting the garment from her trembling hands, gazed upon the mark with eyes that seemed bursting from their sockets. As she traced the characters which fate had decreed should not be entirely bereft of their significance, she uttered a piercing shriek and dropping the article, as if a deadly asp lay coiled within its folds, fell senseless to the floor.

Mr. Carlton rushed to her assistance, and raising the inanimate form in his strong arms, placed it gently upon a couch, while poor Margie, terrified at what she supposed to be a fainting fit, or possibly something

worse, immediately ran for restoratives, which willing hands hastily applied, as each and all eagerly watched the faint hue of returning life that slowly crept over her pallid cheek. Mr. Carlton was greatly agitated, and ere his wife had fully regained consciousness was seeking a possible solution of the cause that induced this sudden and violent paroxysm of grief. Adjusting his spectacles he commenced to closely examine the bit of muslin which had evidently produced such a fearful shock to Mrs. Carlton's nerves. For a moment, he stood mute and motionless, then with a quick meaning glance directed first toward his wife and then at Margie, he exclaimed:

"Great heaven! what can this mean!"

Slowly rising to her feet Mrs. Carlton paused, and summoning all the strength at her command, endeavored to speak, while her bosom heaved with passionate emotion.

"It means, she said, with an appealing look at Margie, who stood pale and breathless, awaiting the crisis which she knew was

at hand—"It means that eighteen years ago I made that infant's robe with my own hands, and upon the hem I inscribed the name which you see written there. It means that this fatherless girl is none other than my lost darling, whom I have mourned as dead through all these dreary years—that a mother's prayer is answered—that the grave has given up its dead—that my child whom I loved so idolatrously stands before me! This little gown was her christening robe, and the one worn by her on the day of her abduction. To Michael O'Connor I owe this, the crowning joy of my life, and to his memory I offer a tribute of praise for the kindly interest he took in my helpless babe when left by the wretched woman who made ship-wreck of my life and whose fiendish act drove my husband into a mad-house!"

Trembling with emotion, Mrs. Carlton sank upon her knees while convulsive sobs shook her frail form that was no longer able to endure the nervous strain to which it had

been subjected. With arms outstretched toward Margie, she cried:

"My child—my baby Helene! the joy of the present hour is only commensurate with the unutterable anguish of the past, and may each succeeding anniversary of our Savior's birth bring as great happiness to your heart, as the developments of this day have brought to me!"

Ere she ceased speaking, Margie lay sobbing on her bosom, while Mr. Carlton and his companion drew near each other and in low reverential tones whispered the congratulations which their manly instincts prompted.

A few hours later the happy family sat grouped around the blazing fire which spread its warmth and glow over each object in the room, giving to the rare old bronzes that adorned the mantel, the hue of burnished gold. Arthur had taken a seat a little remote from the other occupants of the room, as if a sense of delicacy forbade his intrusion upon the sanctity of this happy reunion, and with

folded arms appeared to be in silent communion with his own thoughts. Suddenly arousing himself from this state of apathy he cast an appealing look at Mrs. Carlton who was pouring into Margie's listening ears the varied experiences incident to the great sorrow that overshadowed her early life.

Rising to his feet, he slowly approached his kind hostess, and taking her by the hand, asked in a deferential tone if the time-honored custom among friends did not warrant him in hoping for some token in commemoration of the day; that inasmuch as he had been instrumental in restoring a priceless treasure to its rightful ownership, he thought it but a simple act of justice that he be made the recipient of at least a promise that in the near future he might claim his reward. With an admiring look at Margie, whose youthful face was wreathed in smiles and blushes, he added:

"And while I avow that the coveted prize upon which my exacting heart is set shall never be obtained save through your acquies-

cence and approval, I can but hope and trust that no serious obstacle will arise as a barrier against the consummation of my happiness. Through a brief conversation with my kind friend, Mr. Carlton, I am made to understand that I am now aspiring to the hand of an heiress, which, in order to win, may necessitate renewed effort on my part; but it is with feelings of pride that I openly declare now and forever that the love which I bore the daughter of my father's gardener can never be supplanted even by the matchless charms of the beautiful heiress, Miss LaGrange."

Mrs. Carlton smiled her approbation, as she warmly pressed the young man's hand, and wiping away the silent tears which sprang unbidden to her eyes, summoned Margie to her side.

"My daughter," she began, "this sacrifice would be too great were it not for the fact that the debt I owe this man for having chased away the dark phantom that has haunted my life for eighteen years will

admit of no less recompense. His devotion to one upon whose birth and parentage rested the dark cloud of suspicion, together with his willingness to brave the storm of parental displeasure that he might prove loyal to his own heart, is evidence of his sincerity, and entitles him to our confidence and respect." "Mr. Fairchild," she concluded, "your gentlemanly deportment through this trying ordeal has won for you a place in my heart that is second only to the desire for my daughter's happiness, and inasmuch as you saw fit to elevate her to your own rank and social position when she was but a poor simple girl, without even a legitimate title to the humble name she bore, I leave it for her to say whether the homage paid her then finds a responsive chord in her heart today."

For a brief moment Margie stood speechless, then raising her downcast eyes she looked first at Arthur, then at her mother, and smiling through her tears, she timidly replied:

"If my heart and hand are deemed an equivalent by Mr. Fairchild for all the worry

and trouble I have unintentionally caused him, I will not refuse the latter, as—as—" she blushingly stammered, "heart and hand must go together."

With a triumphant look in his eyes, Arthur folded the unresisting girl in his strong arms, and as he held her closer to his heart, imprinted a lover's kiss upon her trembling lips. Turning to Mrs. Carlton to express his thanks for her generous "Christmas gift," he found that lady had stolen quietly from the room, accompanied by her devoted husband, and the lovers were alone.

There is little more to relate, as none should seek to penetrate the veil which the sweet messenger of love would fain draw over her idols.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CONCLUSION.

It was the latter part of June. Why is this the month in which the recording Angel is most frequently called upon to register vows, which the human heart so blindly offers as a sweet sacrifice on Hymen's altar? No matter why. It was the last of June, and nature, still clad in her bridal robes, awaited the coming of those long sultry days which would change the soft tints of her raiment to the sombre hues of autumn.

Down the graveled walk, that led from the beautiful home of Captain Fairchild toward the village churchyard, strolled the newly-wedded pair. Much consternation was manifest when it was known among the homely village folks that the fair young bride whom Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild had received with open arms was none other than Margie, the old gardener's daughter, whose sudden dis-

appearance a few months previous had supplied them so bountifully with food for gossip.

Hand in hand the young couple slowly wended their way, apparently unconscious of the curious eyes that were peering through half-closed shutters, eager to obtain a glimpse of the fortunate girl whom fate had elevated to the highest plane of social distinction. Arriving at their destination each stood with bowed head as they gazed upon the grassy mound which awakened within their hearts so many painful memories. With a long drawn sigh Margie took from her bosom a bunch of forget-me-nots, and tenderly placed them upon the grave of the only father she had ever known. Turning to Arthur she said, in a voice choked with emotion: "To his memory I owe much, for—

"'Who does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well, acts nobly—Angels could do no more.'"

## LOVE'S DREAM.

Nature, clothed in brightest green,
  Smiles through pearly drops of dew
Starry gems, that stud the skies,
  Mingle with the azure blue;
Floral treasures, sweet and rare,
  Greet us with their sunny smile;
Feathered songsters trill their notes,
  Weary moments to beguile.

Rippling brooklets ebb and flow,
  Gliding down their winding way;
Zephyrs, laden with perfume,
  Dance amid the shining spray.
Life is all one blissful dream,
  Hope's bright anchor cheers the heart,
But, alas for earthly joys!
  Sorrow bids them all depart.

Lips that sealed a lover's vow
  Whisper that sweet tale of old;
Bosom white with rapture swells—
  Sweetest story e'er was told,
Gentle maiden, young and fair,
  Fondly yields her heart and hand:
Child of beauty, wealth, and fame,
  Cupid bows at her command.

Loudly peal the marriage-bells,
  Rings the echo through the air;
At the altar kneels the bride,
  Orange-blossoms deck her hair;
Tender words that plight her troth,
  Love's pure kiss upon her brow;
Heaven's blessing rests on each,
  As they take the solemn vow.

A few bright days of sunshine,
  Then a smile, a tear, a prayer;
The life so fraught with pleasure
  Bringeth trials each must share.
A few years of hard labor,
  Intermixed with pain and grief—
Death opens wide his portals,
  And the weary find relief.

# THE DOCTOR'S SECOND LOVE

From whose hand came this beautiful offering,
Token of friendship that smiles through its tears?
Love's tender missive is borne on the zephyrs;
Hope alone brightens the swift passing years.

Sweet floral tribute so laden with perfume,
Plucked from the bosom of fair Mother Earth,
What is the message which thou wouldst deliver?
Why didst thou leave the land of thy birth?

Faded and drooping thy delicate petals,
Crushed are the leaves that around thee entwine;
Tell me the story ere thy heart cease beating,
For this hidden language I cannot define.

Is there a germ that would take root if nourished?
Is there one spark of life still lingering there?
If so, then I will hope on and forever,
While nursing these flowers with tenderest care.

# THE DOCTOR'S SECOND LOVE.

"Owing to a business engagement," said our good family physician, "which will necessarily detain me in New York for a few weeks, whither I am about to go, I shall be obliged, for the time being, to turn my patients over to my worthy partner, Dr. Beaumond, with whom I have recently established a partnership relation, and who, from a long experience in the profession, is able to minister to their wants in a manner that will meet their entire approbation.

"I am aware that he is a comparative stranger in your midst, but hope the confidence you have ever reposed in me will be in no wise diminished after having, through my recommendation, accepted him in the capacity of your medical advisor. Believing

that no eulogy which I may pronounce upon him will fall short of the high moral and professional standard to which he has attained, I unhesitatingly introduce him to the good people of L——, with the assurance that my successor *pro tem* is a gentleman of more than ordinary culture and refinement, beside possessing those qualities so rarely found in the medical fraternity of the present age, viz.—devout Christianity, coupled with that scarcely less essential attribute, dignity of character that, combined, entitle him to the high calling to which he is so admirably adapted."

Now, our old family physician, although not an adherent to any particular sect or creed, was looked up to as a patron saint by each member of our household, and from my earliest infancy I had been taught to honor and revere his name above that of any gentlemen acquaintance, save the village pastor, to whom was granted the sacred privilege of admission into our family circle. Therefore, the high encomiums so lavishly bestowed

were all-sufficient to ingratiate the new doctor into my father's good graces, and more particularly as he was said to possess a marked degree of innate dignity—that being the shrine at which my paternal ancestor had ever worshipped.

My mother, dear soul, being always a frail, nervous invalid since the time of my birth, and from whom I had inherited the seed of disease, which had previously lain dormant, was deeply distressed at the thought of placing herself, or me, under the professional care of an entire stranger; however, our good Dr. Cornell's word was likewise law to her, and after many anxious inquiries, and fearful apprehensions in regard to the possibility of his continued absence, she feebly pressed his hand, and bidding him God-speed and a safe return, promised, should any member of our family require medical aid during his absence, that Dr. Beaumond should be summoned.

She had, from my earliest recollection, indulged the most exaggerated fears in regard

to my health, always attaching the utmost importance to any change that could possibly be attributed to the slightest indispositon. Knowing this earnest solicitude in my behalf to be one of my mother's weaknesses, I spent several successive days, subsequent to the doctor's departure, in the most alarming state of perturbation, lest she should become needlessly anxious concerning my health, and as a consequence, subject me to the embarrassment of receiving a call from Dr. Beaumond.

Had our good Dr. Cornell, when enumerating the virtues of his illustrious successor, omitted to mention that dignity was one of his prominent characteristics, I might have looked upon him with some degree of allowance; but the well-remembered fact that the particular object of my aversion had been the tall, bony, long-haired principal, under whose tuition I had been placed a year previous, and for whom my father entertained the most profound admiration—in consequence of his possessing a vast amount

of this enviable quality—had made a lasting impression upon my mind; and I ever after associated all to whom this term was applied with my formidable antagonist, Professor Van Slyck.

Not many days elapsed, however, before I was called upon to undergo the painful ordeal of meeting the man of whom I fancied I should stand in such wonderful awe. My mother was suddenly taken ill, and a messenger was at once dispatched to bring Dr. Beaumond. The quiet little town of L—— could hardly be said to afford a lucrative business to the medical profession, therefore a call to one of the first and most prominent families was regarded as the stepping-stone to worldly success. Being somewhat alarmed at my mother's sudden illness, I gave but little heed when the door was opened leading into the sick-room, and the servant announced the doctor's arrival.

My father, who was sitting near the bed, arose, and in his usual quiet, dignified manner formally introduced Dr. Beaumond to

my mother and myself. She unclosed her large, dark eyes, and, with a gentle smile, characteristic of her nature, acknowledged the presence of our stranger friend. As I raised my eyes to his, I observed that he gave a quick, sudden start; but I was too intent upon learning his opinion regarding my mother, to give him a very close inspection; and after having asked a few questions in a low voice, he wrote out a prescription and took his leave. I could remember little else than that he was an exceedingly fine-looking man, about middle age, with fair complexion, and the deepest, saddest eyes I had ever looked into.

For several days my time was divided between superintending the domestic affairs and rendering my mother the little attentions which are incumbent upon those who assist in the sick-room. Although she had a competent nurse, there were numerous attentions required which she refused to receive from other hands than my own. Dr. Beaumond paid her daily visits, and seemed untiring in

his efforts to relieve the sick sufferer, yet there was little apparent change in her from day to day. I noticed that during his calls he always avoided conversation with me; but, whenever my eyes chanced to meet his, they were fixed upon me with that peculiar earnestness that led me to believe I was regarded as an object of more than ordinary interest.

As I was sitting at the window one day, in deep meditation, while my mother had dropped off into a quiet slumber, I was aroused from my reverie by the sound of voices in low, earnest conversation. Not being aware that any visitor had arrived, I walked down the hall, and, on entering the library, was surprised to find my father conversing with Dr. Beaumond, both evidently in an excited frame of mind. Believing this consultation had reference alone to my mother's illness, I stammered an apology for my intrusion, and, with increased anxiety, hastened back to the sacred precincts of my mother's room.

On meeting my father that evening at the tea-table, I fancied that he watched my every motion with a marked degree of interest, and when he addressed any conversation to me, his voice was low and gentle, with an occasional suppressed sigh, as if some heavy calamity was about to befall him. I had resolved upon learning the facts in the case, and fully decided to avail myself of the first opportunity of meeting him alone, and persuading him, if possible, to tell me all that the doctor had said concerning my mother.

As I was revolving the subject in my mind, the nurse quickly opened the door, and, in a hurried and excited manner, informed my father and me that our presence was required immediately in the sick-room. We hastened thither, to find my mother in a state of prostration resulting from a sudden coughing fit, to which she was subject. This was followed by a violent hemorrhage, and on the arrival of the doctor, who was hastily summoned, she had sunk into an almost lifeless condition. All available means were used to restore her

to consciousness, and after the lapse of an hour or more, our efforts were crowned with success, as she lay in a quiet sleep.

In breathless silence we watched the feeble lamp of life, not daring to speak, lest the sudden awakening should extinguish it forever. During the entire night neither of us left her bedside, and on the following morning we were rejoiced to know that we were recognized, although she was still unable to speak. My aunt, the only sister of my mother, had been telegraphed for, and on her arrival I was relieved somewhat from the responsibility that had, until then, largely devolved upon myself.

Tired and exhausted, one evening I sought relief from my cares by taking a quiet stroll down the winding path leading to a pleasant grove near the bank of the lake. As I walked leisurely along, my mind reverted back to the scenes of the past few weeks. I remembered the day upon which my father presented Dr. Beaumond, when first he was called to my mother's bedside, and I also

recalled the evident emotion manifested by him when he first beheld my face. Why this emotion? Why did he start at the sound of my name, and exhibit those unmistakable signs of unrest, when in my presence, that had of late so frequently attracted my attention? Surely this man who was, undoubtedly, twenty years my senior, would hardly be so weak as to bestow one tender thought upon a simple-hearted girl like myself—little else than a child—being only in my nineteenth year.

Then I wondered if a man as old as he had lived all his life without loving somebody, and indeed, was he not even then indulging the fond hope of making some fair girl his partner for life? Why did I shudder at this thought? Something in my own heart told me that, however little I was to Dr. Beaumond, he was very dear to me. I began to realize, for the first time in my life, that the love ever cherished for me, under the paternal roof, was inadequate to fill the vacuum in my woman's heart.

Seating myself upon a ledge of rocks, overlooking the lake, I gazed long and wistfully into the far-off future, wondering why it was that the time must come in the life of every true woman when her heart would be irresistibly drawn toward the one object, and should this be unattainable, she must henceforth travel the journey of life alone, crushing forever the pure instincts of her womanly nature, that were placed in her bosom by the hand of her Creator.

I was aroused from this reverie by a rustling sound among the leaves, warning me of approaching footsteps. Looking up quickly, I saw, a few yards away, coming toward me, the tall, handsome form of Dr. Beaumond. Burning blushes mantled my otherwise pale cheeks, for I felt intuitively that his keen, professional eye would penetrate the inmost recesses of my soul, and therein discover my hidden secret. I was chagrined at the thought of any person's knowing that I had so far forgotten myself as to overstep the bounds of maidenly propriety by allowing my youthful

affections to wander, uninvited, into by-ways and forbidden paths. Walking slowly toward me, he raised his hat, and with a low bow, said:

"Good evening, Miss De Vere; you have truly chosen a lovely spot wherein to while away a pleasant hour. I came around to call on my patient, and, finding her enjoying a quiet *siesta*, I asked to see you, and was told by the nurse that you had gone out for a walk. Knowing this to be one of your favorite haunts, I repaired hither, hoping to find you in this sequestered spot; and as my effort has proven a success, I can only beg your pardon for this intrusion into your sanctuary."

I bade him good evening, and politely asked him to be seated upon the trunk of a fallen tree that lay across the rock on which I was sitting. He accepted the invitation, and, taking off his hat, I noticed that his hair was slightly streaked with gray. Looking up into his deep, earnest eyes, I said:

"Dr. Beaumond, I will pardon you on one

condition only, and that is that you never again call me Miss De Vere."

He arose from the seat I had assigned him, and coming nearer me, sat down on a piece of rock, close at my feet. Fixing his eyes intently upon my face, in a low, sad voice, he smilingly said:

"What shall I call you, then, if not Miss De Vere?"

"Call me Inez," I replied. "That is my Christian name, and a very pretty one, too, I think; don't you agree with me in this particular?"

He dropped his head, and, placing both hands over his face, sat for several moments, apparently in deep meditation. Silently looking up at him, I saw that his face was very pale, and there was a peculiar expression depicted upon his countenance that I had never seen there before. Wondering what I had said to thus affect him, and with a confidence in myself born of the hope, now springing up within my breast, that this man cared for me in some mysterious manner—

else, why would my simple words bring this death-like pallor to his face?—I said:

"Dr. Beaumond, was there anything wrong in my asking you to call me Inez?"

"No, my child, nothing wrong whatever. I shall love to call you by that name—should have asked the privilege long ago of doing so had our acquaintance been such as to warrant me in making the request."

How sweet those words sounded in my ears, "No, my child," when uttered by his lips! And yet, was it really so—that he regarded me as a child? If only that, then the newborn hope that I had lately dared to cherish was indeed a vain delusion, from which the sooner I freed myself, the better for my future peace and happiness. Anxious to draw him out still farther, yet fearing to do so, I looked up into his face and timidly asked:

"Do I really seem like a child, Dr. Beaumond?"

"No, no, Inez! you can never seem like a child to me. I only called you so because of

the great disparity in our respective ages. Inez, you have asked me a question that I have answered; may I now ask you one in return?"

"Yes," I replied, "ask me as many as you choose, but ask me none that I cannot answer."

"Well, do I seem like a very old man to you, Inez?"

A loud ringing laugh was my only reply, but remembering the grave manner in which these words were said, I assumed a dignified train of thought, and replied:

"Well, no; I should never think of addressing you as Grandpapa!"

Seeing the mischievous look upon my face, he said, in a melancholy tone, at the same time extending his hand, as I was about to rise:

"Inez, I think my question is at least entitled to your respect. I had a purpose in asking you this, and shall not my gray hairs defend me from ridicule?"

Drawing my arm within his own, we walked silently in a homeward direction.

Tears were gathering in my eyes, and with a deep sense of grief at having wounded the feelings of the man I respected above all others, I begged him to forgive my seeming lack of respect, at the same time assuring him that to ridicule anything he had said was the farthest thing from my thoughts. Seeing how deeply I regretted the unfortunate circumstance, he took both my hands within his own, and, looking into my eyes, with indescribable tenderness, said:

"Inez, my precious child, there is really nothing to forgive. I fear I am growing morbidly sensitive where you are concerned, but some day, with your permission, I will tell you a story of my early life, that may, in part, explain away my strange behavior of this afternoon."

We had already arrived at my home, and, entering the house together, he passed into my mother's room, while I took refuge within the sacred walls of my own chamber, there to meditate upon the strange transactions of the past few hours.

For several weeks subsequent to the foregoing conversation my mother slowly improved, giving us each day renewed hope of her ultimate recovery. During all this time Dr. Beaumond paid his usual visits, always treating me in a quiet and gentlemanly manner, but never once referring to our meeting and the strange colloquy that ensued. Weary and listless I moved about, performing the daily routine of duties assigned me; for since the anxiety, caused by my mother's illness had in some degree abated, I felt that my nervous system had undergone a severe shock, from which I was hardly able to rally. I was also deeply troubled in my mind in regard to Dr. Beaumond's continued silence upon a subject that occupied my every thought.

Thus day after day passed on. I had grown pale and thin from want of out-door exercise, having been for so many weeks closely confined in the sick-room. My mother, becoming alarmed at my quiet manner and changed appearance, proposed that I

should take a trip to visit my cousin, who lived in a neighboring city, about one hundred miles away. As she was now in a state of convalescence, and having gained my aunt's consent to remain with her a few weeks longer, I felt that my services were not positively required at home, and having buried the one hope in which I had for a brief season indulged, I decided to avail myself of this opportunity, and, if possible, forget the man to whom I had secretly given my heart's best affections.

I at once set about making preparations for my journey, but found, as the time was approaching for me to depart, that the anticipated pleasure of a visit to my relative was hardly of sufficient importance to ease the dull, aching pain caused by the thought that I must so soon bid adieu to him whose daily visits to my mother had for so long a time been my only source of happiness. Having about decided in my own mind, however, that I would overcome this weakness, which was daily growing upon me, I went into my

mother's room, and informed her that it was my intention to start on my journey the following day. She smiled her approval of my plans, and bade me put on my hat and shawl, telling me that a brisk walk in the open air would bring the roses back to my cheeks. After imprinting a kiss upon her pale lips I obeyed her injunction, glad of the opportunity to escape a meeting with Dr. Beaumond, whose arrival was momentarily expected.

The cool air was refreshing, and as I felt a strong desire to again visit the spot where I had held the first confidential meeting with the idol of my heart, I walked rapidly in the direction of the lake. Arriving at the spot, which was sacred to me from association, I again seated myself upon the ledge of rocks where I was sitting at the time of Dr. Beaumond's unceremonious visit. Burying my face in both my hands, I was soon deeply engrossed in my own painful thoughts. Did I truly love this man, or was it only a girlish fancy that would soon pass away? If only

the latter, then why did I—in imagination—at that very moment feel his breath upon my cheek, his loving hands stroking my hair, his tender arms holding me close down to his pure, noble heart? Why was I ever looking into his deep, sad eyes, endeavoring to fathom the hidden secret, which I felt was contained in the story he had promised, at some future time, to relate?

I sat for a long time pondering these thoughts in my mind, when, suddenly arousing myself from this reverie, and consulting my watch, I found that I had already been a long time away from my mother, to whom belonged the few remaining hours previous to my departure. With a heavy heart I retraced my footsteps, and when within a short distance of my home, looking up I saw Dr. Beaumond's horse standing tied in front of the gate. Anxious, if possible, to avoid a meeting with him, in my present state of feeling, I turned into a winding path leading to an arbor adjacent to my father's lawn. Seating myself upon the ground in this

shady retreat, I gave vent to my feelings in an uncontrollable fit of weeping. Scarcely had this subsided when I saw Dr. Beaumond coming through the gate, and down the path in the direction of my hiding-place. Fearing lest he should discover traces of my grief, and question me in regard to the cause, I hastily brushed away my tears, and rising, started to walk in an opposite direction. He was already within a short distance of me, and was soon by my side. Laying his hand gently upon my shoulder, in a sad, pathetic voice he asked if I would grant him the privilege of a few moments' conversation. I attempted to reply, when tears choked my utterance. My half-suppressed sobs being taken as an affirmative answer, he addressed to me the following words:

"Inez, your mother tells me you are going away to-morrow."

"Yes," I replied "that is my intention."

Taking my hand tenderly, he led me away a few steps, seating me upon a grassy mound,

while he reclined upon a rustic seat near my side.

"Inez," he continued, "do you remember our conversation the day I surprised you by invading your sanctuary in the grove near the lake?"

"Yes; I well remember our interview upon that occasion."

"I then promised I would some day relate a story to you that would doubtless explain my strange conduct at that time."

"Yes, I believe those were your words."

"Well, are you ready to listen?"

I gave an affirmative answer, when he narrated the following story:

"Many years ago—while a member of the junior class in college—I received an invitation from my room-mate, Harry Delavan, to spend my vacation of two weeks at his father's home in C——. Having no home of my own—my parents both dying when I was very young—I readily accepted his proffered kindness, and on the day after school closed we took our departure, both

delighted at the prospect of a fortnight's rest from the restraint imposed upon us during our college life. There I met and loved beautiful Inez Delavan, my friend's adopted sister, and during the few blissful weeks, which succeeded our arrival, contrived to win her heart.

"When I took my departure, I was filled with glad anticipations of the future. The next few weeks were fraught with a joy such as I had never experienced before. Life to me was one blissful dream, from which I hoped never to be awakened. But alas for human hopes and aspirations! The reaction came too soon. Her letters, which were my greatest source of happiness, ceased coming at the appointed time, and, although I wrote several, in which I renewed my vows of constancy and undying love, no reply was received, and I was left in ignorance of the cause of her silence. I imagined everything, doubtless, save the real occasion of this estrangement, but could arrive at no satisfactory conclusion.

"I decided at length to make one more effort toward an explanation of this strange mystery, but my worst fears were confirmed when, in answer to my letter, came a cold, formal note from her father, informing me that the engagement between his daughter and myself was broken off, and warning me against any further attempt at a reconciliation. He also stated that Inez was only too happy to restore my freedom, and earnestly hoped that I would very soon forget the unfortunate circumstance which had occasioned her such painful embarrassment. With a broken heart, and wounded pride, I attempted the pursuance of my studies, little caring what earth had in store for me; but I found life intolerable, with all the doubts and fears that clustered around my heart.

"At the close of that term I bade farewell to my teachers and companions, being fully persuaded that a life among entire strangers was preferable to remaining where I was. With a sad heart I informed Harry that he was no longer my prospective brother-in-law,

which appeared to be news that greatly surprised him, and for which he expressed the deepest regret. After graduating at a college in a remote State, I commenced the study of medicine, and since entering my profession, have found a melancholy pleasure in ministering to the sufferings of my fellow-creatures. Marriage has been the farthest thing from my thoughts since the day that I buried my first love-dream. This afternoon I received your mother's permission to relate this story to you, which is true in every particular save that I have used some fictitious names in place of those that are real, for I must now tell you that Inez Delavan is your own mother!"

After I had recovered from the shock produced by this painful disclosure, he resumed his story, saying that for eighteen years he had been true to the memory of his first love.

"But," said he, "when I saw in you the duplicate of her who was once so dear to me, your eyes, features, even your name, being

that of her whom I had long since mourned as dead, is it strange that I should, down deep in my heart, cherish the fond hope of some day calling you mine? Inez," he said, drawing me near him, "I love you as I never loved but one woman; and since the first hour that I beheld your fair face, I have dared to cherish the fond hope of some day winning your heart. Have you no word of encouragement for him who now offers you the poor remainder of his broken life?"

Looking up into his face, and smiling through my tears, I replied:

"If you think that Inez DeVere can fill the place in your heart once occupied by her mother, she will try to do so, provided you gain the consent of her father to give his daughter's happiness to the keeping of another."

Clasping me close to his heart, he imprinted his first kiss upon my trembling lips, and, with a new light shining in his now really youthful face, said:

"My darling! on the day that you entered

the library and found your father and me in close conversation, I gained his permission to win this blessing, that shall henceforth be the crowning joy of life."

The remainder of this story is quickly told. Harry Delavan loved his adopted sister, and, in his uncontrollable desire to make her his wife, he yielded his honor by fabricating base accusations against the character of his friend; and although he succeeded in robbing him of the jewel he had won, the result of his evil machinations were in no wise conducive to his own happiness, for his suit was peremptorily rejected, when first his intentions were made known to his almost broken-hearted sister.

My visit was postponed; and when, a few weeks later, I packed my bridal *trousseau* preparatory to performing that journey, it was with a light and cheerful heart, for the words had been spoken that gave me an undoubted right to the doctor's second love.

## LOVE'S QUESTIONINGS.

My dearest, have I ever caused a pang of grief
To pierce thy heart, in these long, weary years?
Have I not by my love, my prayers, my tears,
Brought sometimes to thy stricken soul relief?

When first we met! Ah me! Hast thou forgot the time
When first I gazed into thy face so pure?
I felt for thee all things I could endure--
Thy nature seemed so gentle, so sublime.

Life's journey then, for thee, had thorns along its way:
The light of love that once had filled thy breast
Was there no more; and, in its place, Unrest
Had entered in and filled thee with dismay.

The dark and threatening clouds which had thy sky o'ercast,
The rays of sunshine hiding from thy view,
I sought to drive away, and then renew
The cherished hopes long buried in the Past.

Must I forever feel Love's labor wrought in vain?
The happiness I fain with thee would share
I cannot give unto another's care;
The thought of this, beloved, gives me pain.

I'll bow my head, and at God's altar humbly kneel;
His blessing I will ask on thee and me;
And if, in time, He wills it so to be,
Perchance in vain may not be my appeal.

Dost thou believe the cross I have to bear is light--
That I can soon forget those happy days
When in this trusting heart shone, bright as rays
Of setting sun, thy love, now lost to sight?

Not lost to me--ah, no!—but hidden from my view,
The miles that stretch their weary length between
My love and me! That dear face no more seen!
Yet, while life lasts, I know he will prove true.

# FRANK LEYTON'S BRIDE

Farewell, my loved one! tear drops are falling;
While thou art journeying on thy lone way;
Distance increasing,
Heart aches ne'er ceasing,
Shadows grow dark, as I kneel down to pray.

Why must this anguish be ever my portion?
When from earth's pilgrimage will I be free?
Life is no blessing,
When daily suppressing,
The heart's tender echo. O, come back to me!

Hourly I listen for those gentle footsteps,
Nevermore coming to lighten the soul;
Days spent in gladness
Have turned into sadness
While time moves along with its unceasing roll.

Farewell, my loved one! tear drops are falling;
But sweet is the memory of those happy days;
When matters were righted
And hearts were united
We mingled our voices in anthems of praise.

# FRANK LEYTON'S BRIDE.

"No, Frank, I can never be your wife! Not that I consider you unworthy, mind, but there are reasons which I cannot disclose that prove to my own heart the absurdity of making a matrimonial alliance with any man. It would be cherishing a vain delusion, which can never be realized."

The speaker was a fair, delicate girl, over whose shoulders fell a wealth of golden hair. Her beautiful, soft, hazel eyes were turned toward her companion, with a half-beseeching look, that bore unmistakable signs of regret at being thus compelled to crush the fond hopes that he had cherished. He lingered at her side, and seemed importunate in his entreaties that she should reconsider her decision, but she persistently refused to even allow him the hope that at some future time she might revoke the decree that had

gone forth. She acknowledged the honor conferred upon her, yet she assured him that her decision was irrevocable.

Frank Leyton turned away to hide the grief that was depicted upon his countenance, which he feared might be considered the evidence of a weakness in his nature. His tall, manly form was bowed down as he vainly endeavored to crush the bitter disappointment her words had caused him. It was a blow that he had half expected when he offered himself in marriage to Cora Dunton, for, during their brief acquaintance, he had never detected the slightest manifestation that would lead him to believe she entertained deeper feelings for him than those of ordinary friendship. Yet he was aware that one possessing her dignity of character, would not wear her heart pinned on her sleeve, and he respected her all the more for her sweet, girlish modesty. He had decided to stake all, even though he lost, for the time had come when he must speak, as the following day he was to sail for

England for the purpose of transacting business connected with the firm to which he had been recently admitted as junior partner. To leave his home for a year or more, in doubt and uncertainty regarding his future prospects, was more anxiety than he cared to endure; therefore, on this bright moonlight evening, the one previous to his departure, he resolved to settle the question on which hung his future happiness.

Cora Dunton loved Frank Leyton with all the intensity of her woman's heart, and, although she had for some time been aware of a growing tenderness on his part, she had never, for one moment, indulged the fond hope of being more to him than a friend.

On the day subsequent to the foregoing conversation, Frank Leyton left his home with a heavy heart, and as the good steamer of the "White Star Line" ploughed the smooth waters of New York Bay, as she proudly steered her course toward the broad bosom of the Atlantic, he stood with folded arms upon her quarter-deck, while a host of

friends on shore were wafting their good-byes and hearty congratulations, almost envying him the good fortune that enabled him to visit a foreign land. One, and only one of that vast multitude, knew of the great disappointment lying so heavily on his heart. Could he have seen the tear-drops upon those pale cheeks and heard the earnest prayer for his welfare, uttered by those trembling lips, as a slight, girlish form shrank away to escape observation, he would have realized that the love of his heart was not bestowed on Cora Dunton in vain.

Frank Leyton pondered over her strange words. Why did she so emphatically assert that it would be cherishing hopes that could never be realized? Might he not obviate that difficulty? And yet, when he had begged her to give him her reasons, she had absolutely refused to do so. Surely her frank manner would indicate that her youthful affections were disengaged. A ray of sunshine crept through the dark cloud, and he resolved to write her occasionally, and, if

possible, keep her young, pure heart free from any other entanglement during his absence, and on his return to ascertain, if possible, the nature of this seeming mystery.

Cora Dunton was the only child of her widowed mother, the latter having removed to the city with her lovely daughter but a few months previous to Frank Leyton's departure. He had made the acquaintance of the young lady at the house of a friend. A warm friendship was the result of this acquaintance, which fast ripened into a more tender passion, and, after visiting her at her own home, and becoming somewhat acquainted with her charming mother, he resolved to propose marriage to this beautiful girl, without really knowing anything regarding her early history or family connections. He had learned that her father had died when she was very young, since which time she had resided with her mother in a small town, some distance from their present location. They had left their quiet home,

taking up their abode in New York, ostensibly for the purpose of finishing the daughter's education. Frank Leyton was hopelessly in love from the beginning of their acquaintance, and questioned only his own heart in regard to this lovely girl. To win her was his highest ambition, and he was anxious to claim her before she came in contact with the world; for, although her mother lived in a quiet manner, he was fully persuaded that one so well calculated to shine in the social circle would soon be sought out, and drawn into the dangerous whirlpool of fashionable life.

Cora was a devoted daughter, and soon made known the fact of young Leyton's proposal and rejection. With painful apprehensions, her mother questioned her in regard to her own feelings in the matter, and was grieved to hear her daughter exclaim, as she threw both arms around her neck:

"Oh dear, dear mother! I am fearful that I loved him better than I ought, for his departure has caused me a deeper heart-ache

than I thought it possible for me to ever experience again."

Clasping her daughter to her breast, she tried to comfort her with assurances that the dark cloud which enveloped her young life would some time be lifted, and the sunlight of God's love shine brightly for her again.

Frank Leyton arrived in Liverpool safely, and, although many days were spent during his journey in the awful suspense caused by a violent, tempestuous sea, he felt that the waves of disappointment which engulfed his heart were more to be dreaded than those which, at times, threatened to swallow up the vessel with its precious cargo of human lives.

For several weeks after his arrival he was engrossed with business, finding but little opportunity for writing to his friends at home, and, finally, when he ventured to address a few lines to the object ever uppermost in his thoughts, he was rewarded with a polite and kind note from her mother, saying her daughter's decision was final, and a

correspondence would only lead to a misunderstanding. After the receipt of this note he resolved to make no further attempts at an explanation until his return to America. He remembered with painful recollection the gentle, beseeching look which she gave him at parting, and he could not help believing that down deep in her heart there was a sympathetic chord that vibrated whenever he addressed her with words of endearment.

Some months subsequent to his arrival in Europe he became acquainted with a young man named Robert Secor, between whom and himself arose a friendly relation. Secor was a tall, fine-looking fellow about his own age, and, as he proved to be a fellow-countryman, young Leyton cultivated a closer intimacy. Finding his companion decidedly agreeable, much of their leisure time was spent in friendly intercourse. As their acquaintance progressed, however, Leyton noticed a peculiar reticence on the part of his new-made friend, and, although he tried

at different times to draw him out in regard to his former life, he persistently evaded communicating anything that would throw light upon the subject.

Secor became very much attached to Frank Leyton, however, frequently inviting him to the theater and other places of amusement. One fine afternoon, as the two were driving on the boulevard, their horses took fright, dashing away at full speed, and before either succeeded in getting them under control, they collided with a passing vehicle, overturning the carriage, and throwing both occupants to the ground. Young Leyton escaped without serious injury, while his companion was taken up insensible and conveyed to the house of a friend. For several weeks he lay in an almost lifeless condition, during which time Frank Leyton was unceasing in his attendance upon him. When the physician abandoned all hope of his recovery, intimating that his injuries were of such a nature that death was inevitable at an early day, he felt that it was

obligatory upon him to inform his friend of the impending danger. With a heavy heart he communicated the sad tidings, at the same time offering to render any assistance that lay in his power. After Secor became cognizant of the fact that his life was despaired of, he grew worse rapidly, and, as Leyton sat holding his hand one day, he unclosed his eyes, and, drawing his companion close down, whispered:

"I am dying, Frank, and, as I am called upon to face the awful reality, I am constrained to unburden my soul of a dark stain that has clouded my life for the past three years. I hoped some day to be able to repair, in part, the wrong which I have committed, but God has seen fit to call me before I have performed the work."

Resting to regain strength, while the great beads of perspiration stood upon his pale brow, he related, in broken sentences, the fact that three years previous he had become enamored of a beautiful young girl, to whom he had been secretly married, while at the

same time he was the lawful husband of another. Immediately after the marriage he was informed that some one who knew of his perfidy was upon his track, and fearing the stern hand of the law he fled, leaving his unsuspecting young wife—as she supposed herself to be—in ignorance of his whereabouts or the cause of his sudden departure.

"If," continued he, "you can find this poor, innocent girl I wish you to tell her of the great wrong done her (if she is not already aware of the fact) and of the tragic end of the wretched man who sinned only because of his great love for her."

Ere he had given his companion a clew to the whereabouts of this unfortunate girl, he was seized with a violent hemorrhage, and before assistance could be summoned the soul of Robert Secor had passed into eternity.

* * * *

Frank Leyton was seated in a little rustic arbor inhaling the pure, fresh air of his

native land, listening to the words of welcome from her who, two years previous had crushed his brightest earthly hopes. In a low, gentle voice Cora Dunton related the few incidents worthy of mention which had transpired during his absence, while in return he was telling her of his life abroad, and of the dark hours when she alone was his guiding star. Placing his arm tenderly about her waist, and drawing her gently toward him, he was in the act of once more proclaiming his undying love, when he chanced to speak of his unfortunate friend, and the narrow escape from death that he himself had undergone. At the mention of Robert Secor's name she suddenly turned pale, and, with a low cry, fell senseless at his feet.

Taking her tenderly in his arms, he hastened to the house, depositing her upon a couch, at the same time narrating the strange event to her almost frantic mother. As he spoke the name of his deceased friend, he noticed a marvelous change pass over the

features of Mrs. Dunton, and, after restoring the daughter to consciousness, her mother begged him to tell her all he knew of Robert Secor. He briefly related what the reader already knows. At the conclusion of his story she raised her tearful eyes, and, with a trembling voice, said:

"Mr. Leyton, it is but just and proper that I should inform you that Robert Secor was the man who stood between you and my daughter's love, for she supposed him to be her lawful husband."

The scene that followed this disclosure can better be imagined than described, and we will simply inform the reader that a few weeks later a quiet wedding took place at the residence of the Widow Dunton, and as the days merged into weeks, and weeks into months, the sorrows of the past were forgotten, and the happy wife looked back with pride and joy to the blissful hour when she became Frank Leyton's bride.

## COME TO ME, DARLING.

Come to me darling, and brighten my pathway!
My head on thy breast I would pillow once more;
Thy tears on my cheek, like dewdrops from Heaven
Will ease this dull heartache as in days of yore.
Sweet was the love-dream so fondly I cherished
In those blissful days that no more will return,
When in thine embrace, so loving and tender,
Was taught me the lesson I cannot unlearn.

Come to me, darling! I list for thy footsteps.
That low, plaintive voice, will I hear nevermore?
Must I never feel thy hand's gentle pressure
Till death shall unite us on that other shore?
Dark are the shadows that linger around me—
The pages of Mem'ry through tears I peruse:
O cruel Fate! thou art so unrelenting;
In vain are petitions when thou dost refuse.

Come to me, darling! O hast thou forgotten
That all other friends were deserted for thee?
Blindly and madly though I loved another,
My heart's dearest treasure I gave to be free.
In all of life's joys thou art my companion;
My first waking thoughts shall forever be thine;
And, although Heaven and Angels forsake thee,
My fondest affections around thee shall twine.

Come to me, darling! I'm weary with waiting,
As the long, dreary days pass slowly away;
Life is bereft of all hope for the future--
The dark clouds of sorrow make night of mid-day.
Must we be parted, my dearest, forever?
Will not true repentance atone for the past?
God in his infinite mercy, will pardon,
And teach us submission to His will at last.

# OUR VISITORS.

Stealthily he creeps along,
  Beside the garden fence;
His trousers rolled above the knee,
  His jacket full of rents.
A gallows on one shoulder,
  A hat without a rim:
He whispered in an undertone,
  "Come on, why don't ye, Jim?"

With one eye on the watch-dog,
  Jim slowly counts the cost:
"If we're ketched in that melon-patch,
  Why, everything is lost!
They'll take us to the lock-up
  As sure as we are born;
Perhaps Old Brown is smart enough
  To catch us!" "In a horn!"

A moment all is quiet;
  Then fell upon the ear
A lusty voice: "Go sic 'em Bose!
  Holloa, you rascals there?
Git out ye pesky varmints!
  I see what you're about;
'Tis them cantelopes ye're arter,
  I haven't any doubt.

"Git out, I say, you villains!"
  The old man loudly cries.
"You'd steal the coppers, I believe,
  From off a dead man's eyes.
If I'd my ox-goad with me,
  I'd make ye smart, you bet;
You'd git a dose of hick'ry-ile
  You wouldn't soon forget!"

"Let's go! He's comin' sure, Jim!
  But I hain't scart a bit;
He dasn't tackle us, ye know—
  But then, we'd better git!"
"Ye 'spose he's got a shot-gun?"
  "Less run with all our might;
And, if he gits a holt on us,
  By golly! I'll show fight."

The boys struck a double-quick;
  But Jim began to feel
What retarded locomotion—
  A stone-bruise on his heel.
And when Old Brown o'erhauled them,
  They both began to cry,
And promised never more to steal:
  "Honest! *We hope to die!*"

# OUR VISITORS.

May I hope for pardon from fond papas and doting mammas, if I enumerate some of the annoyances to which a forbearing hostess is frequently subjected by thoughtless parents allowing their young children to accompany them on visiting tours?

Now, my dear reader, do not consign the writer of this little story to ignominy, nor attach to her name the opprobious epithet of "old maid," for she, many years since, slipped her head into the "matrimonial noose," and now belongs to that class of individuals whose forlorn condition enlists the sympathies of the major portion of her sex. Yes, it must be confessed, that to her lot has fallen the dire calamity of passing her wedded life in the rest and quietude of a home, entirely destitute of these little pets of the human species.

I already hear a chorus of voices echo "sour grapes," but this mild retort is hardly sufficient in itself to deter me from relating some of my personal experiences while entertaining friends, who, upon reading this story, will doubtless smite their breasts as did the "publicans," and thank their lucky stars that their children are not like other people's. Now, these little troublesome comforts are all right in their proper places; but we aver that there is no place as suitable as their own home, until such time as they shall have reached the years of understanding, or at least have been properly trained, so as not to bring reproach upon their parents or guardians for not having sufficient force of character to control the junior members of their household.

Not many years since, as the story-tellers say, one of my dearest friends, whom I had not seen for a long time, informed me by letter that she intended visiting me at no very distant day; at the same time announcing the fact that she should be obliged to

bring the younger portion of her family along, asking if it would be convenient for me to receive them. Of course I anwered in the affirmative, quaking in my shoes at the prospect of our quiet home being invaded by a corps of juveniles, whose tender years were considered, by their mother, a reasonable excuse for their visitation, and in view of which I could hardly refrain from answering that they were decidedly too young to be allowed dominion outside the nursery.

Desiring, however, to evince a marked degree of genuine pleasure at the opportunity thus afforded, for resuming an old-time friendship, I assumed a cheerful demeanor, and quietly set myself about the necessary arrangements for the entertainment of my expected guests. First, I shortened all the cords from which my pictures were suspended, elevating my pretty paintings until a landscape could hardly be distinguished from a portrait of Gen. Washington. I then transferred every piece of statuary, that had heretofore ornamented my

center tables, to the seclusion of a dark closet. My vases, card receiver, etc., together with my choicest books, photographic albums and stereoscopic views, were consigned to the top pantry shelves. I also gathered up my sheet music, placing it inside the piano, and, after shutting down the cover and locking the same, I was nonplussed to know where I could store my beautiful new "Steinway." This I could not hide in the china closet, nor yet in a drawer of my dressing case, so, after having draped the legs in brown linen, and carefully covered the stool with the same, I drew a deep sigh, inwardly resolving that, should I ever be blessed with children of my own, I would restrict them to the limits of my own domicile. My flowers, of which I had but few, it being out of season for a variety, were also objects of deep solicitude. And my little black and tan terrier, for which I entertained the most profound admiration, also proved, for the time being, a source of anxiety. The latter, however, judging from past experience, was

fully capable of self-defense, and I only hoped the enemy would suffer no more serious results from the impending skirmishes than had my poor little tortured pet, on previous occasions. Our home looked forlorn, after having been stripped of all that various paraphernalia which had previously added so much to its attractiveness. But, looping up the curtains, I consoled myself with the thought that it was better thus than to risk the wholesale devastation that I was fully persuaded would overtake my household treasures, were they left in their proper places.

On the day appointed for the arrival of my guests, I seated myself at the window, after having made a hasty toilet, and with a consciousness that all things were secure, anxiously awaited the arrival of the train upon which they were expected. As the carriage drove up I saw my husband alight, and soon my friend, with four little ones, the eldest having attained the mature age of eight years, were ushered into my presence.

Nurse was there likewise, but was so unfortunate as to have but two eyes and two ears, with a corresponding number of hands. The mother had been my dearest friend in our girlhood days, and in the genuine pleasure of meeting after a long separation, we quite forgot the children, until reminded, by hearing a loud crash proceeding from the kitchen, that they had invaded "Bridget's sanctuary."

Hastening thither, we found that, in the momentary absence of the servant, Master Johnnie had made a tour of the culinary department, and in so doing had overturned the water pail. This interesting young gentleman was completely submerged, and screaming at the top of his voice for assistance. The frightened mother came rushing frantically to the rescue, and, clasping him in her arms, returned thanks that he was not drowned; at the same time expressing regret at the limp and dilapidated appearance of his "bran new suit." But I failed to discover any traces of grief depicted upon

other faces than my own for the utter ruination of my handsome new floor mat, which had received the contents of the water pail (that is, the portion that "Johnnie" had escaped), and over which I had labored faithfully for two successive weeks.

Glad that nothing worse had occurred to disturb our equilibrium, we returned to the sitting-room, and were soon deeply engrossed in conversation, the children, in the meantime, having been sent out with the nurse for a little ramble in the yard. We were soon interrupted, however, by "Susie," a miss of four summers, who appeared upon the scene with her apron filled with my choicest heliotropes and calla lily, which, for several weeks, I had been endeavoring to nurse into blossom. These, with a poor little tea-rose bud that was just unfolding its delicate, wax-like petals, comprised her floral treasures. I rushed into the dressing-room to hide my tears, and on passing through the door overheard her mother admonish the child against plucking any

more flowers, as "perhaps Auntie would a little rather not have them picked." This injunction from *mater familias* was strictly adhered to, as there was not one bud remaining upon my few choice house plants.

At the tea-table that evening I was called upon to devise some means whereby these youngsters could be seated. High chairs were an unknown luxury in my dwelling, consequently all the empty starch boxes and inverted stone jars, together with a large copy of Shakespeare, Webster's Dictionary, and the family Bible were called into requisition. After the lapse of fifteen minutes, or more, these little urchins were seated, during which time the fried oysters and hot cakes had ample time to cool.

Several other friends made their untimely appearance, and were, of course, asked to remain for tea. The invitation was accepted upon this particular occasion, doubtless in consequence of our milkman having failed to furnish the usual amount of cream, and likewise, I discovered, when too late to

obtain more, that but one small can of fruit had escaped fermentation. Trying to make the best of the awkward situation, I winked at my husband to dish out the fruit sparingly, and commenced pouring the tea. My friend, thinking to aid me, insisted upon preparing the children's tea herself. Passing her the cream, I noticed, to my horror, that she poured half the contents of the pitcher into "Johnnie's" cup, and the remainder, with the exception of a few spoonfuls, was given to "Susie." I watched the process of manufacturing that beverage in breathless silence. I imagined that my other guests took in the situation, as neither of them "ever took cream in tea."

The peaches were gone before my husband had served all present, and I felt my cheeks burning when "Miss Susie" swallowed the last piece in her dish, and her indulgent mamma asked for "a very little more of the fruit," adding "that her children were passionately fond of peaches." All things come to an end, and so did that supper, and with

a flushed face I escorted my company to the drawing-room, sighing for the good old times when children were not expected to occupy seats at the first table, to the exclusion of their elders; and when a slice of bread and butter and a frolic on the lawn answered in place of the post of honor at the table, with a half dozen courses, and as many knives, forks, and spoons, accompanied with tea or coffee as the child's taste dictates.

But this was only the beginning of sorrows! The next day brought the same amount of trial and forbearance.

My friend and I went out for a walk, leaving the children at home with the nurse, whom I had privately instructed not to leave them one moment alone, nor allow either of them to get out of her sight. On our return, after the lapse of half an hour or more, I found, to my chagrin, that a "foul" ball had made a flying leap through one of the parlor windows, breaking a pane of glass; and, while the nurse had followed little "Tom-

mie," who took it into his head to try his dexterity at running a steamboat on the fish-pond, "Susie" and her younger sister had availed themselves of a bottle of ink, the contents of which they had poured upon my new moquette carpet.

My friend manifested considerable consternation at the latter; but tried to console me by imparting the valuable information that there were certain preparations that would most likely remove all traces of the stain.

I knew that a never-failing recipe would be to replace the soiled width with a new one, which I immediately resolved to do.

The next thing that attracted their attention was the locality of a bird's nest, built in a honeysuckle which crept over a trellis near my window. This was an object of my supreme adoration! For three successive years this little feathered songster had never failed paying me its annual visit, building its nest and rearing its family in this particular place. Finding that these young

Anarchists were cognizant of the fact of its existence, I took them all out, and, after showing them the tiny blue eggs, I delivered a brief sermon, my text being the grave crime of destroying birds' nests. I imagined that my eloquence on this occasion had taken deep root in the hearts of my hearers, for they, one and all, made a most solemn promise never to desecrate the sacred precincts of a bird's nest. I soon learned, however, to my sorrow, that "to err is human," for on my return from a ride one day I was attracted to the spot by the fluttering and chirping of my little pets, as they flitted from branch to branch in painful confusion. On a close observation I saw the little nest dangling from a broken vine, underneath which lay the tiny eggs, or what remained of them—broken shells.

At the expiration of one week, which terminated my friend's visit, I found that copious drafts had been made upon my small stock of patience. And I felt that it would require but little more to exhaust the entire

stock on hand. I was somewhat mollified, however, when my friend informed me "that never in her life had she enjoyed a visit so much, attributing her pleasure largely to the fact that her children had never made her so little trouble. But then her children were always good when away from home. Were they like most people's children she should never think of taking them with her." Pressing my hand warmly at parting, and with her eyes swimming in tears, she said: "You have a very beautiful home here, my dear, but it lacks the chief joy—'prattling tongues and tiny footsteps!' But," she added, "'whom God loveth He chasteneth!'"

These were comforting words, for I felt positive that I had found favor in the "Divine Eye." After their departure, I provided myself with a bottle of cement and a quantity of furniture polish, and set myself at the rather unpleasant task of repairing damages.

I gathered up the broken fragments of glass and china ware, mending them as best

I could. My husband employed a glazier and a kalsominer, each one day; and after furnishing new hinges for the gate, erasing the caricatures from the front door and garden fence, and getting several chairs re-bottomed, we settled down to quiet life once more, resolving that it is not our duty to adopt "one or more children," as our friend suggested. If *blessings* are withheld from us we believe it is for some wise purpose, and we shall try to be happy, and content ourselves with an occasional visit from our youthful friends.

## A COLLOQUY.

Two young maidens, fresh and fair,
  Sat beside a babbling brook.
Spake the one with golden hair,
  "Jessie, 'spose we bait our hook?
Look ye here—there's John and Hank;
  Both have got it pretty bad.
Now be honest, true and frank—
  Why, what makes you look so sad?"

"Well, the fact is, Nelly dear,
  Of their love I'm not so sure;
Hank sometimes gets on his ear,
  And his pranks I can't endure.
Why not angle in a stream
  Where you know you'll get a bite?
Time is precious—I'm eighteen,
  And my hair is turning white.

"Now, you know that Charley Moore,
  With a mustache so divine,
Took me to see 'Pinafore.'
  He's my feller every time.
And, besides, he's got the sand—
  He can keep a wife in style.
Offers me his heart and hand."
  "Ah!" quoth Jessie, with a smile,

"Then you've got a dead sure thing.
  Well, you'd better keep it, pet.
When I find one I can trust,
  I'll freeze to him, now, you bet!
But, pray, tell me just how long
  Since this honor was bestowed;
You don't think it would be wrong?
  Tell me, do! or I'll explode.

"Now, these chaps are mighty queer,
  And you can't most always tell
If a feller is sincere.
  Can you trust this city swell?"

"Well, I'll tell you how it came
(But, of course, don't let it out).
I don't know as I'm to blame.
If he's mad, why let him shout!

"'Twas upon one Sunday eve—
We'd returned from Lincoln Park;
Just before he took his leave—
Well, you know the room was dark,
And I can't tell for my life
Just the way he did begin,
But I heard this, 'Be my wife!'
And I answered, 'That's too thin!'

"But, in less than half a jiff,
He was kneeling at my feet,
And began to whine and sniff,
'Oh! Take pity on me, sweet!
Life ain't worth a picayune
Without you, my queen of hearts!
Say the latter part of June
We launch our matrimonial bark.'

"So the answer I must give
E'er another week goes by;
And, as surely as I live,
I don't know how to reply;
But I think that I'll waltz in,
And consent to cook his goose;
For you see he's got the 'tin,'
Else I'd find some good excuse."

"Well, it must be pesky hard
To decide a point like this;
But you hold the winning card—
So be brave and wade in, Sis!
Here, old pard, I wish you luck;
And, although a risk you take,
Keep a good stiff upper lip:
Here's my hand! So good-bye! Shake!"

# WASHINGTON LETTERS

# WASHINGTON LETTERS.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 18, 1878.

Since the reassembling of Congress, Washington seems to have donned her "Sunday suit," and the rush of richly-dressed pedestrians one meets in going to and from the Capitol and White House proves the fact that many others besides your correspondent are intent upon seeing "the Lion." Old residents claim that it is exceedingly dull here when Congress is not in session; consequently the social world avails itself of this glorious opportunity of seeing and being seen; while the wily boarding-house keeper lies in wait for her prey, and, baiting her silver hook with soft words and bewitching smiles, easily captures her unsuspecting victim; and when once caught in the meshes of her silken web, no male member of society was ever known to escape until he had paid at least one month's board in advance.

One enters the Capitol for the first time with feelings akin to awe. The wide halls, marble floors, broad corridors and stately walls decorated with rare and elegant paintings, many of which are life-like representations of great and noble men, who long since mingled their ashes with mother earth—to tread, as it were, in the very footprints of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and

their long train of successors; to look upon every side and behold statues of Nature's true noblemen, which stand as living witnesses of victories achieved; of heroic deeds, recorded in every heart as well as upon the annals of history—all this combined has a tendency to furnish food for solemn thought, and to produce feelings of reverence that are due the sanctuary rather than the halls of Congress. On being ushered into the Senate chamber we succeeded in procuring a front seat in the gallery, where we had an unobstructed view of that august body of law-makers. To look down upon this array of legal talent—to gaze upon these craniums supposed to contain such a vast amount of brains—in short, to feel that one is brought face to face with these headlights of the political world—causes us to close our eyes for the time being, and place a shield upon our brow to shut out the blinding rays. If I were an adept at drawing pen pictures, I should select Roscoe Conkling, of New York, as a subject worthy the admiration of even the "Old Masters." His is a face, once seen, can never be forgotten. Tall in stature, well-formed, probably a man over whose head fifty winters have passed, but upon whose brow few traces are marked by the fingers of Time; his entire make-up is unmistakably stamped with the impress of power. What the Republican party lost in the death of Senator Morton must surely find its equivalent in the person of Roscoe Conkling.

The Senators were nearly all in their respective seats, and a finer looking body of men would be hard to find. As a specimen we offer the Hon.

William Windom, of Minnesota. Bruce, the colored member from Mississippi, is a man of fine physique, intellectual face, and gentlemanly deportment, in fact, does credit to the African race. Senator Thurman, from Ohio, is a grand looking man, with a proud and determined air; and the time-worn face of the Hon. Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, although an ancient picture, is worth looking at. There is but little business of interest before the Senate just now, and having satisfied our curiosity, will pay a brief visit to the House of Representatives. Here we find all is confusion. The number of members being nearly double that of the Senate, less order prevails, and the dignity so apparent in the Senate is lacking in the House. Speaker Randall occupies his accustomed seat, and is quietly engaged in writing. The majority of members appear to be holding a levee. Some are laughing and chatting; others, with their organs of locomotion elevated several degrees above zero, are perusing the daily paper, inwardly digesting the compliments paid their wives at the last reception, or silently contemplating their chances of promotion at the next election. On the House being called to order, we discover many vacant seats. A little sparring takes place between Garfield and Fernando Wood, upon some question that is being hashed up and warmed over. A few home thrusts elevate the "dander" on the heads of some others, and a general war ensues. After the smoke clears away, and the wounded and dying are cared for, we learn that a vote is being taken upon this evidently all-absorbing

question. But alas! the decimated ranks need reinforcements! Messengers are dispatched in all directions to discover, if possible, the rendezvous of these absentees. Directly they came pouring in from all quarters, some apparently intent on business, while the majority come sauntering along, with their hands in their pockets, or else giving their silken beard a digital combing, seemingly unconscious that they are representative men, sent here by the people, for the purpose of looking after their country's needs. The vote was taken, however, in the usual form of yeas and nays, but some dissatisfaction seems to necessitate a count, and after bracing up manfully one against another, they manage to go through the tiresome process of being counted. Their services being no longer required they filed out again, probably in search of some more congenial pastime. Gen. Garfield seemed thoroughly in earnest, as did Fernando Wood and Cox, of New York. But we came to the conclusion that they were on special duty, while those who were averse to taking an active part, and reluctantly granted their presence, were simply enjoying their "off day." The painful scene is the crippled and emaciated form of Alexander Stephens, of Georgia, who seems to have but little use of any organ, save the brain, and is wheeled about in a little cart by one of his servants.

After a few closing speeches, the House adjourned until the following week, which will enable the members to recuperate from the enervating duties incumbent upon them. Verily, a few days among the scenes, where "distance lends en-

chantment," is sufficient to loosen the scales, which would doubtless drop from the eyes, were we to go behind the curtains.

We were present at some of the meetings of the Woman Suffragists, who held their convention here a few days since, occupying Lincoln Hall. Conspicuous among them were Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Matilda Jocelyn Gage, Dr. Mary Thompson, Isabella Beecher Hooker, Dr. Mary Walker, and others. The last-named individual can hardly be classed among *women* suffragists. Judging from her dress, I should define her as "he, she or it," quite as likely to be one as the other. The abuse and inuendoes which these crazy-headed fanatics heaped upon the government and its leaders was a disgrace to the hall that bears the honored name of Lincoln, and we half expected to see the dead martyr appear as a reproach to this lawless band of termagants. The pernicious influence of this howling mob upon the minds of weak women is deplorable, and a direct means of sowing broadcast the seeds of discord, which have already taken root, and are bearing fruit in many otherwise happy homes. Dr. Mary Walker identifies herself with this dissatisfied band of female politicians, much to their chagrin and mortification, as her manner of dress and public expression of odious and obnoxious sentiments make her the subject of ridicule, and evidently detracts from the possibility of that doubtful wreath of laurels with which they hope at no distant day to crown their aspiring heads.

President Hayes' first reception of the season

was held on Thursday evening, the 14th inst., from 8 to 10. These receptions are exceedingly democratic in their nature; a place where old and young, rich and poor, the plebeian and patrician, unite in paying their compliments to the Chief Magistrate. Being present at this reception, I took down a few items which may be of interest to your readers. Commencing at eight o'clock a dense throng crowded the entrance and halls, making it extremely difficult to reach the state dining room, which was used as ladies' dressing room. On leaving this apartment, each lady and gentleman was obliged to fall into the rear of the line of march. The crowd moved on slowly, entering first the Red Room, through which they passed into the Blue Room, where they gave their names and were presented to the President by his son "Webb," and to Mrs. Hayes by Col. Carey.

The personal appearance of the President is not particularly striking, yet he is possessed of a kind, genial face, which beams with sympathy and good nature. Mrs. Hayes was richly attired in a white silk and velvet dress, demi-train, *a la polonaise* Her raven hair was arranged in a style peculiar to herself, and best calculated to show off her broad, intellectual forehead. A heavy Grecian coil at the back, confined by a shell comb, and the front hair brushed down severely plain, with a small finger puff back of each ear. No jewel or flower adorned her person upon this occasion, save a large brooch that held in position the rich folds of lace that encircled her throat. Her *tout ensemble* was a model

of elegance and simplicity, but, I am sorry to say, she finds but few followers among the Washington belles. Both President and Mrs. Hayes wore a smile of well-feigned pleasure at the manifest annoyance of being compelled to stand for two consecutive hours while that vast multitude filed by in a continuous stream, many of whom grasped the extended hand of the President, and, in their delight at the honor conferred upon them for the first time, tugged away like a thirsty school-boy at a frozen pump-handle. One young lady exclaimed as she took his proffered hand, "Why, you are the first President with whom I ever shook hands!" Mr. Hayes answered with a smile, "I am happy, indeed, to be the first." Passing on into the East Room we find it closely packed with representatives of all the different classes of society. The wives of foreign diplomats and Cabinet Ministers, resplendent in rare laces, and illuminated by flashing diamonds, present a striking contrast to the pale-faced, careworn woman, who is wearing her life away in the foul air of one of the departments, or perhaps earned the neat alpaca dress in which she is clad by making button holes at one cent apiece, the price paid in Washington. Among the distinguished persons pointed out to us were Secretary Evarts, Chief Justice Waite and wife, Carl Schurz, Postmaster General Key, Gen. Sherman, Madame Mantilla, wife of the Spanish Minister, who, by the way, was the cynosure of all eyes, being particularly distinguished for her rare jewels and elegance of dress; besides many others, of which time and space forbid making mention.

The Marine Band was in attendance, and at the hour of ten the signal of dismissal was given by the appearance of the President with Mrs. Hayes upon his arm, and as they passed through the East Room the band struck up the suggestive air of "Home, Sweet Home," which was a welcome sound to all, judging from the grand rush in the direction of the cloak room. But having already written a much longer letter than I intended, will bid you

*Au revoir.*

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 11, 1878.

Within the last two weeks Washington has been the scene of many events of more than ordinary interest; yet all are of minor importance compared with the grand display witnessed at the funeral of the late Victor Emanuel. This celebration in honor of Italy's dead King took place at St. Aloysius church, and was attended by all the pomp and grandeur necessary to impress upon the American mind the awful magnitude of this solemn occasion. A large catafalque covered with white satin and black cloth was placed near the altar, surrounded with burning candles. The Italian colors of green, white and red, together with rare flowers, manufactured into garlands, crowns and crosses, were displayed upon every side. The American colors floating from the pew of President Hayes and from various other points, together with the charm of beholding the Foreign Legation in their full regulation court costumes, with the awe-inspiring Requiem Mass, rendered in such pathetic strains, made the occasion one long

to be remembered. Hundreds of people remained outside, unable to effect an entrance, but all wore a look of satisfaction at having seen what they could, except one poor old lady who "didn't think a funeral amounted to very much where they refused to show the remains." Marriage bells followed close in the train of these funeral rites, and the evening of the following day witnessed at Wormley's Hotel the celebration of the wedding of King Alfonso, of Spain, to the Princess Mercedes, the Spanish Minister and his wife presiding. This assembly was made up of the *elite*, and is considered the great society event of the season, as the superb dresses, magnificent laces, jewels, etc., worn by the ladies upon this occasion far surpassed anything heretofore seen in Washington this season. Mrs. Hayes' receptions, held every Saturday afternoon from 3 to 5 o'clock, are largely attended and are of an exceedingly brilliant character. As the hour approaches the grounds and driveways leading to the Executive Mansion are densely packed with gaily caparisoned equipages, many of which, on being unburdened of their freight at the front entrance, display a motley throng of shoddy aristocracy. The ostentation and vulgar pretense of the would be nobility is simply disgusting, and a scene well calculated to disabuse the mind of the erroneous doctrine that "noble animals may be produced from scrub stock." Being present at the last reception, we were enabled to make a close observation of the surroundings in general, and of Mrs. Hayes in particular. Contrary to the usual custom' she received in the East Room, the immense

size of which renders it a more fitting place, as the crowd heretofore in the Blue Room made access insufferable and retreat impossible. Mrs. Hayes was assisted upon this occasion by the wife of Gen. Dawes, of Massachusetts, her guests, as before, being presented by Col. Carey. She was unpretentiously, but richly, attired in a wine-colored dress of silk and velvet, cut demi-train, elbow sleeves, square neck, filled in and around with puffs and ruches of rich old lace. Her only ornaments were a cluster of full blown tea roses, half hidden in the folds of lace, and an elegant chain necklace, from which depended a heavy gold cross. These, together with long buttoned white kids and a tea rose in her hair, completed her toilet. Mrs. Dawes wore a light drab silk, full train, trimmed in black thread lace, and flowers in her hair. The toilets of these two distinguished ladies were quite modest in comparison to the gorgeous apparel that adorns the devotees of fashion who assemble at these receptions. During a brief conversation with Mrs. Hayes, one perceives that she possesses a cultivated mind, also a vast amount of assurance, and would be perfectly self-reliant under all circumstances. Bright, natural and vivacious, she puts one perfectly at ease, and her manner of addressing strangers is charming in its simplicity. In her social position she strikes one as an extraordinary woman, from the fact that she is wholly devoid of those hollow society manners that have characterized many of her predecessors. The estimation in which she is held by the stern sex, may be judged from a remark recently made

by a well-known politician. While gazing at a picture of her, which hangs in a reception room at the Capitol, he exclaimed, in his enthusiastic admiration: "There hangs a picture of the President of the United States." Whether this remark will be regarded as a compliment by our Chief Magistrate is somewhat questionable. It may appear a little strange to those who are unaccustomed to Washington society, to learn that the prevailing custom is for strangers to take the initiative step toward an acquaintance, rather than wait until they are sought out and gradually drawn into the mazy vortex of fashionable life. The fact, however, that this is a time-honored custom, relieves the embarrassment that would otherwise follow; and the cordial manner in which strangers are received when calling upon the families of Cabinet Ministers, Senators and Representatives, as well as Foreign Diplomats, confirms the fact that social life in Washington is unlike that of any other city in the United States. Wednesdays, being the reception days of the Cabinet ladies, the streets present a lively appearance, as the carriages roll over the smooth pavements in close succession, heavily freighted with costly velvets, silks and laces, together with gold and precious stones, bismuth and carmines—and occasionally may be found those rare curiosities known in ancient times as *heart* and *brains*. In paying our respect to these distinguished ladies, we were graciously received and charmingly entertained by the wives of Secretaries Evarts, Sherman, McCrary and Thompson, and the lovely daughters of Carl Schurz, who, it is

said, partake largely of the sweet characteristics and noble virtues of their deceased mother. These ladies, with their assistants, were in full dress, presenting all the attractions of Worth's temple of art. Their stately drawing-rooms were redolent with rare exotics of luxuriant growth, and the display of cut flowers—many of which were the complimentary gift of Mrs. Hayes—were sufficient in themselves to afford a pleasing subject for conversation. Having been presented to the hostess and those who assist her in receiving, we managed to get through with five minutes' small talk, after which we were ushered into the dining-hall, where we find a table laden with an abundance of tempting viands, consisting chiefly of tropical fruits, delicious cakes and sandwiches, with coffee and chocolate. We usually found from fifteen to thirty guests at each place, the majority of whom were ladies, although many gentlemen of rank and title avail themselves of these opportunies of creating a hope in the susceptible heart of some fair sister. On being marshalled through the wide halls, down the marble steps, and over the carpeted walks leading from these palatial mansions to our carriage, we had simply a dim and shadowy recollection of beautiful ladies enshrouded in royal robes, of waiters with dusky faces and immaculate gloves, of delicious fruits, and rare flowers, costly bronzes, Turkish carpets, and rare old paintings. But, better than all, we had a sweet consciousness that these angelic creatures of whom we once in our overdrawn imagination pictured as ethereal beings, are simply of

human origin, and apparently manufactured from soil no richer in natural endowment than that of many others who meekly tread the humble walks of life. In visiting the Capitol one day, we overheard, in one of the reception rooms, an amusing conversation, which took place between Dr. Mary Walker and a lady visitor. The doctor presented a very masculine appearance as she sat with her right foot gracefully perched upon her left knee. She scrutinized her victim closely before making an assault, when suddenly a flank movement brought her close to the side of her stranger friend. She inherits, from some source, enough womanly instinct to enable her to search out the weak points in her frailer sisters, and make the attacks accordingly. In the course of a few moments' conversation she adroitly informed the lady that her beauty, if she ever possessed any, had gone into bankruptcy. She attributed the cause solely to the present style of dress, which she declared to be ruinous to the health and happiness, as well as the personal appearance of the female race. As a means of regaining what was irretrievable in any other way, she insisted that ladies should adopt the style of dress worn by herself, which consists of a pair of pantaloons of the latest fashion, a jaunty little hat and cane, and a most marvelous outside wrap, which is a cross between a petticoat and a "swallow-tail." The persecuted lady seemed to hesitate somewhat, when the wily female practitioner approached us and applied the thumb screws. After airing her powers of eloquence by setting forth her doctrine in a bewitching manner,

and having wrung from us the humiliating confession that to woman's vanity alone belonged the evils of lame backs and weak stomachs, she seemed to take it as granted that she had secured one more convert. With a smile and a wink, she asked, or rather demanded our name to be placed upon her subscription list for a book, of which she was the author, and as a compliment which she seldom bestowed, she would read a few extracts of her manuscript, which she felt sure would secure the sale of the book. Not being particularly partial to that kind of reading matter, we very respectfully declined to subscribe for the book, but solemnly promised to interview "Barrie" upon our return home.

A few days since, we, with a small party of pleasure seekers, visited Mount Vernon. As we sat out on the guards of the little steamer "Arrow," that makes daily trips to this point, and gazed in admiration upon the broad bosom of the Potomac, our mind reverted back to those three long dreary years of anarchy and bloodshed. To the time when our brave Minnesota boys fought so nobly upon the green banks of this grand old stream, in defense of a nation's honor. And the feelings of pride that swelled our hearts were mingled with pain as each related his or her sad experience, and reviewed the dark days of long ago, when every newspaper paragraph was carefully perused to learn some tidings, if possible, of the loved son or brother, who belonged to the "Grand Army of the Potomac."

Arriving at our destination, we go at once to the

tomb of Washington, that being the chief attraction for strangers. This is simply a large brick vault, with heavy double iron doors, through the bars of which we can look upon the sarcophagus that contains all that is mortal of the Father of our Nation. At the side of this, stands another scarcely less elegant in which rests the mortal remains of Martha Washington. The American eagle carved in marble, ornaments the former; and a dark stain which blots the pages of history, is the fact that, during the war, some unknown person effected an entrance to this vault by climbing over the doors—a most difficult feat to perform—and desecrated the spot by breaking off a portion of the foot of this sacred emblem. This is the only attempt at violence ever known to have been made upon the tomb of Washington. In close proximity stand several stately monuments, erected to the memory and bearing the names of different members of the Washington family. The mansion in which this honored hero lived and died is a wooden structure of that ancient style of architecture known only to the "Old Fathers." It is well kept up, as are all its surroundings, and contains many relics both novel and interesting. Among them is a harpsichord, said to be two hundred years old, a wedding gift from Gen. Washington to his adopted daughter. A small case was hanging upon the wall, containing a key of the "Bastile." This key is said to have been placed there by Washington's own hand and never since removed. It was greatly prized by him, being a present from Gen. La Fayette after the destruction of the famous French

prison in 1789. A large case with glass doors, containing many ancient relics, was on exhibition, one only of which we have time to make mention. This was a letter, the date of which was obliterated by time, but enough of its contents were left for us to decipher the fact that at some time in the life of our first President he was engaged in the wheat business. And on ascertaining that he had made a transfer of some of that product to a Baltimore man, recommending it to grade No. 1, and afterward learning that it was impregnated with some foreign matter (before unknown to him) which slightly detracted from its market value, he hastened to inform the parties of the seemingly fraudulent transaction, and begged the privilege of making amends, offering to stand the loss himself should it grade No. 2. This story I give for the benefit of wheat dealers in the Northwest, to whom it will doubtless seem as incredulous as did the story of the "little hatchet" to us in our childhood days.

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WASHINGTON, March 1, 1878.

As the time draws near when the Lenten season will cloud the horizon of social life and awaken many who have become idlers in the Lord's vineyard to the necessity of carefully weeding out the garden of the heart, we find that each day swells the list of party invitations, and the little remaining time ere the "pomps and vanities" are called upon to clothe themselves with the mantle of humility, is regarded as the last link in the chain of earthly enjoyment. Each bright particular star

in the fashionable world is struggling to eclipse its neighbor, and evidently jealous of the light which may chance to be shed abroad by a more luminous orb.

Among the notable social events of the past week was the reception given by the Secretary of State, and Mrs. Evarts. This was a very grand affair, and in many respects far surpassed any entertainment in which we have participated since coming to the capital.

The honor conferred by a card of invitation, we reluctantly confess, was divided equally among *two thousand* people, making the portion which we so proudly record upon the annals of our life's history of infinitesimal dimensions.

Time usually passes only too rapidly amid the gay and festive scenes of Washington life, but upon this occasion we impatiently counted the days that must intervene before we should realize our bright anticipations. The hour came at last and with it the carriage that was to convey us to the hospitable mansion of the distinguished statesman. Upon reaching the same we found that a long line of carriages preceded ours, and as those in the rear closed in upon us, we were fearful that our vehicle would be telescoped by the aristocratic steeds that appeared to be familiar with the premises and looked their disgust as they proudly arched their necks, champed their bits and flashed their gold-mounted harness in the bright gaslight, apparently annoyed at being compelled to keep their queens of fashion veiled from sight until we lesser lights were disposed of. We were finally ushered in

and up the broad staircase to the ladies' dressing room, where hundreds were already assembled, filling the halls and every other available space. After giving a finishing touch to our toilet, we descended to the parlors, where we were presented to the host and hostess by an individual who called out the name as he announced the visitor in the most vociferous manner, intending to inform the entire crowd when a notable arrived, and subject the few unfortunates who claimed no title to distinction to the mortification of having the fact proclaimed to all present.

Secretary and Mrs. Evarts received their guests in a quiet, dignified manner, bestowing upon each and all their smiles and pleasant words, as if the stock on hand were inexhaustible. The former is a thin, spare man, with a bright, intellectual face, pleasing manners, and whose *tout ensemble* strongly reminded us of Mr. Joseph A. Prentiss of Winona. Mrs. Evarts is a plump, handsome woman, with bright, sparkling eyes, and a wealth of beautiful gray hair, which was arranged in a most becoming style. She was attired in black, and bore in her hand an exquisite bouquet of rare flowers. The usual amount of jamming and pushing took place which is attendant upon occasions where two thousand people are invited to apartments that can barely accommodate five hundred. Many of the ladies, for fear of damaging the waists and sleeves of their superb dresses, took the precaution to leave them at home, which evidently detracted somewhat from the pleasure of the gentlemen, who manifested a good deal of embarrass-

ment, as they blushingly gazed at the naked busts, necks and arms of those over-sensitive and *painfully modest* divinities, who made ineffectual attempts to veil their charms from public view, by improvising screens out of fans, bouquets and handkerchiefs, which they held up in the most bewitching and tantalizing manner imaginable. These scenes are beyond description, and would hardly be tolerated in the drawing room of a western lady, no matter how devout a worshiper she might be at the shrine of fashion. To those who are unaccustomed to this style of undress, it is simply shocking, and we wonder that such absurd fashions can possibly find favor in the eyes of ladies who bear evidence of culture and refinement. Among the distinguished persons present were Sir Edward Thornton, Carl Schurz and daughters, Secretary and Mrs. McCrary, General Burnside, General Sherman, Senator Blaine, Ben Butler, the Spanish and Japanese ministers with their wives, Mrs. Gen. Gaines, and many others. During the entire evening refreshments were being served, and at an early hour many took their departure, owing to the fact that several other receptions were held the same evening, and they doubtless desired to honor all with their presence. Among that number was Ben Butler. Consequently if any *spoons* were missing he can doubtless prove an alibi. All kinds of entertainments, both amusing and instructive, are only too numerous, and we regret our inability to be in two places at the same time.

The fine lectures delivered here within the past few weeks have been a true source of enjoyment,

and we are happy to state that the Hon. Geo. R. Wendling of Illinois, in a reply to Bob Ingersoll's lecture on "Hell," completely "chewed up" his antagonist and left his lifeless form a quivering mass of lacerated flesh. The latter delivered his lecture upon this all-absorbing topic some time since, and as our orthodox mind was somewhat distracted by the disagreement of great minds upon the subject, we were disappointed in not being better able to settle the question for ourselves, after having heard the Colonel's discourse upon his future home. The great orator never tires narrating his experience upon that memorable Sunday afternoon, when, with pockets filled with marbles, he watched the receding rays of the sun, which was a signal of release to those young prisoners, or would be, when it imprinted upon their cheeks its good-night kiss. The subsequent course of the aforementioned "Bob" annihilates the doctrine that "as the twig is bent the tree inclines."

Murphy, the great temperance agitator, is laboring just now in this wicked vineyard, and is said to be very successful in impressing the important truths upon the hearts of his hearers. We were somewhat surprised, however, a short time since, on learning that one of his converts was seen rushing down the avenue at break-neck speed, monopolizing the entire sidewalk, while his badge of reformation had become detached at one end, and full two yards of blue ribbon was seen proudly sailing in the wind, to the astonishment of all beholders. A comrade attempted to rescue him from the jeers and taunts of the rabble that pursued him,

when he boisterously shouted: "Lem-me go! (hic!) I'm off for Murphy meetin' (hic!). Zat man 's a powerful influence over me (hic!) Three cheers fo' Murphy an' temperance! 'Rah!"

In calling upon the wives of senators we did ourselves the honor to call upon Mrs. Windom, who is quietly settled in her new and elegant home on Vermont avenue. She looked very charming in her wine-colored silk, garnished with lace and flowers. It was her reception day and her well-filled card-receiver attested her popularity. She spoke of her strong attachment for her Winona friends and appeared to still retain an interest in her Minnesota home. Upon leaving these pleasant apartments we overheard the following remark: "Winona can boast of one handsome lady." We smiled gushingly, and were in the act of bowing our acknowledgment of the compliment, when suddenly our cup of happiness was upset by the additional sentence: "Mrs. Windom is the most beautiful woman we have called upon to-day." Alas! how very easy it is to mistake one's meaning.

We also called upon the wife of Senator Blaine, where we were cordially received by that lady and Miss Dodge, cousin of Mr. Blaine, better known as 'Gail Hamilton."

The former is a tall, queenly-looking woman, of rare fascination, and as one observes her grace of manner, as she moves about her luxuriant home, they are disposed to regard her as a very suitable person to adorn the parlors of the White House. Of the bright, chatty little authoress we can only say, although not at all prepossessing in her per-

sonal appearance, she is endowed with rare conversational powers, which make her very attractive, especially to her gentlemen friends, who, notwithstanding the missiles which she recklessly hurls at their devoted heads, swarm around her like honey-bees on a buckwheat field.

We completed our calling tour by paying our respects to Mary Clemmer. This charming lady owns a fine brick residence on Capitol Hill, and together with her mother and sister is apparently leading a quiet and happy life. She wore, upon this occasion, a pale-blue dress of some fine, soft material, which was elaborately trimmed with bows of ribbon of the same delicate shade. Her beauty was somewhat enhanced by a tiny white lace cap, which was placed upon her head in a coquettish manner, giving her face a very youthful appearance. She is still unable to walk without the aid of a crutch, not having fully recovered from the recent accident which befell her while out riding with her friend, "Jenny June" (Mrs. Croley).

Doubtless the readers of the *Republican* are well informed in regard to the excitement at the capital during the agitation of the "silver question," and everything we might add would be superfluous; therefore we will leave them to draw upon their own imagination. But to those who were so unfortunate as not to be present, and who wish to form a correct idea of a scene in the House the day the silver bill passed that House of Congress, we would respectfully refer them to the Board of Trade in Chicago, during a wheat panic.

# HOT SPRINGS LETTERS

# HOT SPRINGS LETTERS.

HOT SPRINGS, ARK., Jan. 29, 1877.

Thinking some of the readers of the *Republican* might be interested in a brief sketch of the experience of a Winonian at the Hot Springs of Arkansas, allow us the privilege of sending them a few lines through the columns of your paper.

We arrived in this quaint little town of about 3,500 inhabitants (not including the visitors) on the 28th ultimo. We reached Malvern at 4 o'clock a. m., where we changed from the Iron Mountain to the Little Hot Springs railroad, owned by "Diamond Joe." We fully expected to be landed in a bed of roses, but to our unbounded astonishment, were told by the worthy conductor to put on our leggins, as it was snowing furiously outside, and on stepping out upon the platform we realized one of the few delusions of the "Sunny South"—snow six inches deep, mercury 4° above zero. Of course, having lived several years in Minnesota, this had a tendency to give us a home-like feeling. We were, however, soon ensconced in one of "Diamond Joe's" little palace cars and being rapidly whirled away toward our destination, where we arrived safely in about one hour from the time we left Malvern. We tried several hotels before finding one to suit us in all respects (being very fastidious

in our taste), and finally took rooms at the Arlington—a very wise thing to do, as we have since learned.

This hotel is a very large, commodious wooden building, intended to accommodate about 250 guests. It is a new house, well and handsomely furnished, and the table is calculated to satisfy the wants of the "inner" man. There are other good hotels here, however, besides the Arlington, and also many pleasant and desirable boarding houses. The Grand Central, Hot Springs, Waverly and Avenue are all considered first-class, with prices ranging from $40 to $100 per month. Good accommodations may be procured at private boarding houses much cheaper. There are about 150 guests at this hotel, and many new arrivals registered every morning. I find nearly all the gentlemen have a "Col." or "Capt." attached to their name. Among our guests is a young lady who claims the honor of a relationship with Gov. Tilden. It is my impression if this young lady were to visit Winona, we should find many young Tilden men even in the Republican ranks. There was considerable consternation manifested a few days since by the arrival of a detachment of the 23d regiment.

One nervous old lady rushed out on the street, declaring there was to be another "Yankee wah." We began to think that a mule and musket might not be out of place, but soon learned that the soldiers were only here to assist the Government Receiver, if necessary, in collecting rents from those who had "squatted" on lands belonging to the government. The colored people are very amusing

to one who is unaccustomed to their peculiarities. A bright little girl, of perhaps seventeen summers, to whom we had endeared ourselves by giving her sundry bright ribbons and ties, met us the other day walking with a gentleman friend. She shoved her tongue into one cheek and, with a chuckle, said, "Beaux comin' roun'; I'll tell ole man." Another little circumstance happening during our "cold snap" seemed rather ludicrous." A snow storm is almost an unheard of thing here, consequently the people (like the "Arkansas Traveler") have no provisions made for such emergencies. Nearly all the hotels ran out of fuel. I heard a lady ask a colored boy to replenish the fire, as it was getting cold in the room. He replied, "Hain't got any wood!" She requested him to saw some, when he curtly said, "S'pose a fellah will saw wood when it snows? Wouldn't do it fo' five dollahs a day." We presume this "darkey" had been "bulldozed" and did not intend to be put through that process again.

The springs are a great curiosity, and judging from the personal experience of many who have given them a fair trial, there must certainly be something very powerful in their healing properties.

A gentleman from Tennessee came here a few weeks since on crutches, having been unable to walk a step in seven months, and after using these waters three weeks, laid aside his crutches and used only a cane, and one week ago I saw him shaking the "fantastic toe" at one of our "hops." He is now able to go about without the aid of cane or crutch.

The weather for the past few weeks has been very damp, raining most of the time. At present it is delightfully warm; about what we might reasonably expect the last of May in Minnesota.

The scenery in this little spur of the Ozark Mountains is wild and romantic. I hardly think there is an acre of arable land within three miles of the town. The mountains are covered with huge boulders, tall pines interspersed with the mistletoe and holly, the latter bearing bright, scarlet berries. Occasionally, as we wander around through the ravines, we find a negro shanty, from which will emerge about twenty little wooly heads. As we go out for our evening walk and see the women working out of doors, the little children making "mud pies," and the violets and crocuses blooming beneath our feet, we drop a sympathetic tear for the loved ones at home, and make an ineffectual attempt to get up some enthusiasm for the "beautiful snow."

Yesterday we attended St. Luke's Episcopal church, and were pleased to see a respectable looking edifice, and on entering found it bore quite a churchly appearance, having been prettily decorated with evergreens, mottoes, etc., for the Christmas festivities. The attendance was rather large, being composed mostly of visitors. I think there are but few church people belonging here. There is quite a large Sunday school, and the ladies' sociable meets weekly at some one of the hotels. I was told that the church was in a comparatively flourishing condition, and also that it owed its present state of prosperity largely to our beloved Bishop

Whipple, who was untiring in his efforts to aid and assist them during his brief stay at the Hot Springs about three years ago. The music was exceedingly fine, the best we have listened to for many a day, but we hope the members of St. Paul's choir will console themselves, as did the Red Caps, that they were only beaten by a "picked nine," (all professionals), from the whole United States.

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HOT SPRINGS, ARK., Feb. 25, 1877.

As the season advances, we find ourselves in the noise and bustle of a fashionable summer resort. Every hotel, boarding house and saloon is filled to overflowing, and on the arrival of each train guests are sent away from the Arlington for want of more room. We find that not only invalids visit this modern Bethesda, but a large portion of the wealth and fashion from all parts of the United States assemble here annually for curiosity, pleasure and recreation.

Since the land, so long in litigation, has been conceded to the Government, improvements of all kinds have been rapidly progressing.

A large and commodious bath-house is in course of construction over what is known as the "Big Iron Spring," and throughout the entire valley business and dwelling houses are undergoing repairs, besides many new ones being built. Those who have heretofore been unable to obtain a title to the land upon which their improvements were made now seem very sanguine that Government

will deal justly and generously with them, consequently there is a wonderful revival in the business interests of the town.

The Hot Springs, which number fifty-eight (a new one having been recently discovered), are of temperatures ranging from 90° to 150° Fahrenhei.t

The medicinal properties of these springs are said not to differ very materially, the principal elements contained therein being silicates with base, iron, magnesia, alum, lime, etc. The popular "Arsenic Spring," which has gained such wide-spread notoriety among the ladies as the "fountain of youth and beauty," is found, by careful analysis to contain very little, if any, of that precious ingredient, therefore is not as zealously sought after as when supposed to be strongly impregnated with this wonderful beautifier. However strange it may seem, these hot, thermal waters are, by most people, after a little time, guzzled down with an apparent relish; for myself, I must confess to a preference for a lemonade with a "stick" in it.

For the benefit of any who may contemplate a visit to the Hot Springs we would quote a conversation held between a prominent New Yorker and a darkey, whose occupation was that of bath-man. Our city friend asked the gentleman of color, jestingly, what he had better do in regard to the baths; if it were safe to take them on one's own responsibility, etc, The reply was: "Fust consult de doctah, un obtain de cause; den de watah's he cure ye." Had this conversation taken place before the November election, doubtless some sore-headed politician would have accused the medical fraternity

down here of "intimidation." We recently paid a visit to the colored school, where we were both amused and interested. A bright young colored man, who told us he was educated at Chillicothe, Ohio, had charge of the school. There were about eighty scholars in attendance, of all sizes and colors, shaded down from ivory-black to the fair hue of the Anglo-Saxon race. The pleasure manifested by these sable urchins, when their master handed us their slates, to inspect their writing, spelling, etc., was truly enjoyable, and a word of praise brought a merry twinkle in the eyes of the happy recipient. The school appeared to be conducted in a quiet, orderly manner, and some of the pupils were bright and intelligent. A visit to the colored Methodist church is likewise worthy of mention. This rude structure could hardly be considered a respectable place in which to stable cattle; yet the occupants seemed very proud of their church building, since they were enabled to make their last improvements. Rough board benches, and a slightly elevated platform, upon which was placed a writing desk and chair, comprised the furniture. The younger women were dressed in the most grotesque manner imaginable—old faded ribbons and flowers being the chief part of their apparel; and their principal occupation during the service was chewing gum and casting significant glances across the room at their sable lovers, many of whom were in imminent danger of losing their ears from an overgrowth of paper collars. The singing was a feeble attempt at the old-fashioned Methodist revival times, but they were perverted into an inde-

scribable jargon, that at times was not unlike the howling of a dog. The sermon was delivered about as coherently as one of George Francis Train's lectures, and some parts of it quite as laughable. The preacher admonished his flock against the grave crimes of stealing poultry, drinking whisky and running off with their neighbor's wife, the latter evidently being paramount in their category of transgressions. He also told them, among other things, that he had "medicated evidence" of there being a powder magazine under these mountains, and unless they turned from their wicked ways His Satanic Majesty would touch a match to it and blow them all to pieces; and, by way of making it more impressive, he added: "If you don't believe what I say, jes' read de 'Pilgrim's Progress.'" As he waxed warm in his discourse several women began to shriek, and one of them, after jumping up and down until she was exhausted, threw herself upon the floor, while two of her dusky comrades sat down upon her prostrate form to keep her quiet—a feat, even then, they were unable to perform.

One of the most unpleasant things here, with which we come in contact is the unparalleled suffering among the paupers. Many of this miserable class have begged their way here, and during the past winter have lived in an almost hopeless state of destitution. These wretched individuals take refuge in the side of the mountains, in close proximity to the springs. Having neither food nor shelter, they at once commence the difficult task

of erecting rude cabins, the material used being old pieces of boards, sticks and coffee sacks, while their only means of sustenance is begging the refuse from the different hotels. There are about fifty of these huts scattered along up the mountain side, not one of which is a fit habitation for any member of the human family.

The question of building a hospital for the benefit of these helpless sufferers, is under consideration. A few benevolent individuals have already made liberal donations for the furtherance of this humane project. A large majority, however, take a view of this important matter from the same standpoint as did the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* in regard to the efforts of Winona in behalf of the grasshopper sufferers; and for fear of "overdoing" the work of charity, they drop a silent tear, and consign these poor mendicants to the tender mercies of Him who multiplied the "loaves" and "fishes."

## WHAT IS LIFE ?

"What is life ?" I cried in haste,
Life is but a barren waste ;

A dark gulf of black despair,
With no ray of sunlight there.

All along the dreary road
Hearts are struggling with their load,

Weary souls, in anguish moan,
Longing for the great Unknown.

Sharp thorns pierce the tender flesh,
Old-time wounds must bleed afresh.

Blasted hopes and broken vows
Do no sympathy arouse.

Dark clouds hide the shining sun,
Friends desert us, one by one.

Look we for our love in vain ;
Ghastly sight ! Our idol slain

Aims and aspirations dead ;
Promised joys forever fled.

Tears and heart-aches by the score—
This is life—and nothing more.

And a still small voice within
Murmured, "Penalty for sin"—

Gently whispered in my ear,
"Life is *what we make* it, dear."

# SHORT PIECES OF PROSE

# SHORT PIECES OF PROSE.

## The Newspaper an Educator.

It is a lamentable fact, but nevertheless true, that women, as a class, pay very little attention to the reading of newspapers. Many will be shocked at this assertion, and in self-defense will declare their inability to agree with the writer of this article. They will insist that a perusal of the papers is their daily practice. Granting this to be true, we would ask how many read them for the purpose of posting themselves upon the various important topics of the day? An elopement, murder, or some other thrilling or sensational article is greedily devoured, and doubtless the fashion notes are carefully scanned, while the important political items, editorials, and the vast amount of general information which is so easily acquired by giving a small portion of each day to the regular reading of a good newspaper, is too frequently ignored from the lack of interest felt in the affairs of our country.

Few ladies, comparatively speaking, are able to converse intelligently upon subjects which ought to be familiar to all. They regard politics as something purely masculine, and a lady who dips too deep into that fountain of knowledge is scoffed at, dubbed as strong-minded, and consequently to be

shunned and dreaded, by male and female, both great and small. We can see no good reason why women should not understand the political situation of the country as well as her more fortunate brothers. All are equally interested in the public welfare, or ought to be at least; and although denied the right of suffrage, they can, by their influence, do much to bring about good results. Married ladies are too apt to fall into a monotonous routine of home cares, to the exclusion of all else. They acknowledge their duty in attending to the material necessities of their families, but must this be done to the utter exclusion of all development of their own mental organs? Now, the careful perusal of the newspapers furnishes food for thought, and a woman who is not deficient in this line of reading is better calculated to enhance the pleasure of her husband, as well as prove herself essential to the happiness of her friends. Her keen sensibilities make her alive to the interest of everything good and noble with which she comes in contact; hence, her sphere of usefulness is greatly enlarged. A thorough knowledge of all passing events, both in the business and political world, is a means for the development of the conversational powers, which we consider one of the chief attractions of a lady. If she be able to engage in a discussion upon any topic; can show by her conversation that she is well posted, we contend that she rises much higher in the estimation of her opponent if he chances to be of the opposite sex. Surely knowledge is power, and will never fail to elevate any individual, either male or

female, and a woman's education need not necessarily cease at her marriage. How often we hear it remarked, that Brown, Smith or Jones, is to be pitied because he has such an illiterate wife, while he, intellectually, is vastly her superior. Now the chances are, that, years ago, when he led her a blushing bride to the altar, she was in all respects his equal. Why this seeming difference in their mental calibers? Simply because all along the journey of life he has progressed while she, if not positively retrograding, has stood still. The *boy* admired her bright eyes and rosy cheeks. The *man* must see something to fill the vacuum caused by the absence of those personal charms else, he is sadly disappointed. Home is an earthly paradise to the intellectual man, if in it he finds a mind corresponding to his own. We do not say it is always the case, but in very many otherwise well-regulated homes the husband seeks more congenial society, because he is deprived of it at his own fireside, and we cannot but believe that the domestic circle would present more attractions if the women would give more time to the culture and development of the mind and less to personal adornment.

The majority of women plead a want of time, and excuse themselves for this lack and disregard of mental culture, on the plea of having so much to do. Now we know from personal experience that a woman will find time to perform whatever she is determined to accomplish, and if her heart is in the work of self-improvement, she will take at least a small portion of her time in fitting herself for other positions in life tha n that of cook and cham

bermaid. These are grand accomplishments in their lines, but a man can hire a girl for three dollars a week to fill either position, and we are quite positive that he admires a higher standard of acquired abilities in the woman who is to adorn his home, and be to him the companion of a lifetime. We believe reading to be a sacred duty, and there is little else of more importance to either man or woman, than a careful perusal of the solid matter contained in the columns of a first-class newspaper.

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## Another Side of Woman's Rights.

The question of "woman's rights" has for a long time been agitated in all its various aspects. Not only the right of suffrage, but also have women claimed the right to fill positions which have heretofore been monopolized almost exclusively by the opposite sex. We hear those, especially who are dependent upon their own resources for a livelihood, denounce the gross injustice which compels them to perform the same amount of labor, and although equally competent as teachers, saleswomen, book-keepers, etc., to cope with their antagonist—man—are obliged to accept the situation at about one-half the salary given the latter, simply from the fact that she is so unfortunate as to be an off-shoot of that precious rib, taken from the first "noble work of creation." Without thorough investigation this seems like a gigantic wrong perpetrated upon the weaker vessels, because of that weakness; but on giving the matter careful con-

sideration, we are inclined to think that this apparent evil is largely attributable to the fact that our young women as a class, do not take up any of the numerous professions which are open to them at the present day, intending to make it a life-work, as do our young men. A young woman who fits herself for any position, whether it be professional or otherwise, as a rule, is only seeking to derive temporary aid until such time as she shall meet her "affinity," who doubtless will at once transplant her to a more congenial soil. Now, when a woman takes upon herself the grave responsibility of the marriage relation, her usefulness ceases, save in the grand capacity of wife and mother. With that end in view, we contend that she does not meet the demands of her employer as satisfactorily as if she knew that she must be ever self-dependent. In every pursuit of life no one is expected to be an adept in the beginning. They can attain perfection only by thorough application; consequently they can command remuneration for their services only in proportion to their ability; and not unfrequently their employers are greatly annoyed by their inefficiency, which is tolerated only in the hope that in the future they may develop that degree of excellency which will compensate him for his patience and forbearance. Now, when he contemplates the fact that nine out of every ten employes are to leave him as soon as they have become efficient to serve him advantageously, he will no doubt regard them as transient customers, whom he cannot depend upon, and likewise pay them accordingly. How about our young male friends?

They are quite as apt to contract the matrimonial fever as our fair sisters; yet for them to seriously contemplate being heads of families is necessarily the strongest incentive to renewed efforts as business men. Their barks once fairly launched upon the rough sea of matrimony, they cannot afford to grow indifferent to the interest of their employer; but as a rule are more earnest in their endeavors to acquit themselves creditably in any vocation they may have undertaken. We do not say that the above is a reasonable excuse for the paltry wages paid women in comparison to that received by male help, but we do believe it is one great reason for the inequality existing between the salaries paid to both classes. Neither would we be understood to place all women under the head of husband seekers; but where one is found with the full intention of devoting her life to any profession that can and will be successfully carried out after she becomes a wife and mother, there are hundreds that are only waiting for some man to make them the generous proposition to work for their board and clothes during their natural life, with the additional honor of bearing his name, and calling him their lord and master.

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## Who is to Blame?

My attention was called to an article in The Home entitled "The Men Responsible," and I cannot forbear expressing my views briefly upon this

subject. Minnie has dared to enter the lion's den, as did Daniel of old, and attach the folly of extravagance in women to its proper origin. That many husbands and fathers are plunged into bankruptcy by the needless expenditures of their wives and daughters, no one denies, but that this extravagance is attributable solely to brainless women, who cultivate the love of dress simply to gratify their own personal vanity, I am unwilling to admit. I have known many modest and sensible young women who were, perhaps, dependent upon their own resources for a livelihood, that dressed neatly and in good taste, and who were occasionally invited into fashionable society, being appreciated by some noble lady for their real worth; and what was the result? These same young women, who were in every respect calculated to grace the homes of any upon whom they would condescend to bestow their affections, were openly snubbed by a set of brainless coxcombs, who were probably in debt for the wax so lavishly bestowed upon the down under their noses; and while these really superior girls were left to the tender mercies of some venerable bachelors, these young immaculates were fluttering about the daughter of some persecuted millionaire like millers around a candle blaze. Now, so long as this state of things exists, just so long will women be spurred on to ape the customs and manners of those upon whom are bestowed the exclusive attentions of the sterner sex. It is the innate nature of woman to love admiration, and when the lords of creation prove themselves to be admirers of genuine womanhood—preferring the gold to the dross,

instead of bowing in supreme adoration to diamonds and laces, then, and not until then, will society be revolutionized. No sensible man or woman can blame any young lady for endeavoring, if possible, to gain at least common respect from their gentlemen friends, and this is scarcely shown them unless they are gotten up regardless of expense. They stand back and see their fair sister the center of attraction, simply because she dresses in style and elegance; and any young girl would be more than a patron saint if she did not neglect the nobler qualities of the mind and fall into the train of those who monopolize the entire attention of her male friends. A young lady of the nineteenth century, who is the happy possessor of sufficient brains to enable her to dress according to her income, provided that should be ever so limited, would find but little encouragement from even that class of individuals who are forever croaking about the extravagances of women.

We admit that our sex should have a higher ambition than that of gaining favor in the masculine eye, but human nature is the same the world over, and if the men have not the moral courage to bestow their attention upon their lady friends, who, as they say, cannot sport a silver-plated harness, they can hardly expect the weaker vessels to possess strength of character sufficient to enable them to see themselves ostracised from society, not only by worthless snobs, but by those who claim to be shining lights in our "best circles." And while so much is being said upon this important subject of the extravagance of American women,

we would ask our brother accusers to weigh the matter well and decide for themselves as to who should bear the blame if the fair sex do spend a vast amount of time and money upon personal adornment.

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## In Self-Defense.

It would hardly seem possible, after having been so completely "squelched" by my formidable antagonist, the illustrious "Xantippe," that I should ever again venture an opinion, or at least give it publicity through the columns of the Household. But, as I have partially recovered from the shock produced by the onslaught made upon me, because of my brief little article, in which I endeavored to set forth some of the numerous reasons why women as a class, can hardly expect the same remuneration for their services which is bestowed upon their more fortunate brothers, at the same time admitting, if my memory serves me right, that the reasons I assigned were hardly sufficient in themselves to warrant this apparent injustice, I have dared to once more enter the lion's den, doubtless at the peril of being crushed by the diversity of opinion and knock-down arguments of this exasperated correspondent. It certainly required a vast amount of self-denial and Christian fortitude for a being so incensed as was this aforementioned "Xantippe," to forego the pleasure for "two mortal weeks," of wiping out of existence all traces of the ignoramus who is guilty of the atrocious crime of expressing *an opinion*. It seems that the enor-

mity of any offense can only be classed in the same category with that of the offending "Beth," who was so unwise as to declare her preference for a home in some other State than our beloved Minnesota. I would say just here that should I receive no more serious damage in this attack, and acquit myself as creditably as did this erring sister, I shall feel that I am a near kin of the "king bee" in this "hornet's nest," into which I have so lucklessly stepped. Now I believe the columns of the Household were set apart by our kind and indulgent editor for the purpose of allowing the numerous readers of his valuable papers, to express their own ideas in their own way, and should any one of the many contributors, be so unfortunate as to volunteer an opinion, which is not in accordance with the views of some other, would it not be quite as conducive to the pleasure which the reader hopes to derive from a perusal of these columns if they will simply give their own ideas upon the subject in a clear and concise manner, rather than resort to the absurd practice of assailing the articles of those who certainly claim the right to a hearing, providing the good editor is so indulgent as to grant them the privilege? I believe if each and all who write for the Household would adopt this simple rule, that the interest which we all feel therein would be greatly enhanced, and this particular department might be, in a greater degree, of mutual benefit to its readers. I despise controversy, either in public or private life, and being a stranger in the Household, hope to avoid personal combat with its members, but will add that I

think it very poor taste, to say the least, for any of us to censure the editor because of the non-appearance of our articles, or should they be subjected to the trying ordeal of passing through the dissecting room previous to publication. I have yet to learn that he is obliged to publish all, or any part of what we send him, if he chooses to decline. And I think we show a want of gratitude if we do not consider it a personal favor bestowed upon each one when an article of our production appears, rather than to feel that we are conferring a compliment upon the paper by sending articles, many of which, were he not generous enough to give us the Household, would never see printer's ink, unless we paid advertising rates for every line.

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## Music Teachers.

We have in this nineteenth century an overplus of so-called music teachers. It seems to be a very general opinion that any person who has acquired the ability to perform upon the pianoforte is unquestionably competent to fill the position of instructor in this important branch of education. Parents too often place their young children under the tuition of persons who are recommended as fine players, without ascertaining whether they possess any of the requisites which characterize good teachers. We frequently hear it remarked that so-and-so is probably incapable of giving instruction to advanced pupils, but will do well

enough for beginners. Now, it is just here that the evil presents itself. It is an incalculable wrong to give these little ones over to the mischievous influence of any person who is not thoroughly trained in the science of teaching. It does not necessarily follow because one plays well, that he is capable of imparting that knowledge to another, and I can see no good reason why music teachers should not be compelled to undergo the same rigid examination before attempting their work, as do our teachers of common schools; for a wrong method taught in music is infinitely more difficult to overcome than that in any other branch of education. Improper training at the outset may impede the progress of the pupil for years. I write understandingly in this matter, having many years since been disciplined by a genuine graduate from Boston. There was once, to me, a certain ring about this last sentence that filled my unsuspecting heart with confidence, and I yielded a willing victim to the wiles of this famous Bostonian. Never having received the slightest knowledge of the science of music, I was wholly unprepared for the fiery ordeal through which I was called to pass, and I give my experience, briefly, for the benefit of those who may, at some future time, be tempted to nibble at the same bait. My worthy teacher informed me that I would be required to take three lessons per week, intimating that to pursue this course would soon enable me to gain a proficiency which would far exceed my most exaggerated anticipations. Accordingly, I set to work with a will, and for six

successive weeks I faithfully labored five hours each day (Sundays excepted), and at the expiration of my first term I think I had taken ten pieces of sheet music, and, with the exception of one simple waltz and a sacred song, I believe that Gottschalk's "Last Rose of Summer" was the piece least difficult to perform among my vast collection of instrumental music; for, be it known, my stock was by no means confined to these ten sheets aforementioned. There was from one to three pieces of classical music invariably left for my perusal at each successive visit from my teacher. These, together with a new instruction-book, Czerny's several works on velocity and mechanism, and a few other valuable acquisitions, seemed necessary aids to my extensive knowledge of music. I have never been able to ascertain what percentage he received for furnishing me with the same. At the close of my first term I had gone nearly through Bertini's instruction-book; and, in fact, there seemed to be but very little in the line of music with which I was not supposed to be familiar. I was highly complimented upon the manner in which I played the scales. In taking a retrospective view of the case now, I think there was a striking resemblance between the smoothness of my performance of that feat and a lumber wagon passing rapidly over a corduroy bridge, the difference being decidedly in favor of the wagon.

Technics and all manner of finger exercises were entirely ignored as a waste of time after the first three lessons. I would say right here that this

professor of music collected the tuition money due him at the end of the term, which, with the few little extras furnished, amounted to considerable, and left town. I afterwards learned that his only object in getting up a class at this time was to obtain money enough to carry him back to Boston. But I was disinterested in his whereabouts! My ambition about that time was to show off my musical attainments; and as my fame was shed abroad, I was frequently importuned at small gatherings to favor my friends with the rendition of some familiar piece; but on being escorted to the piano I usually declined playing classical music, and never had my notes with me. On one occasion, however, I remember being prevailed upon, through great persuasion, to play some one of my favorites, which consisted of "Mary to the Savior's Tomb," "Greenville" and a waltz "Greenville" I always held in reserve, so as to be able to respond to an encore, provided I was so fortunate as to be thus honored. After announcing the pieces which I was able to perform without my music, I seated myself at the instrument. An attempt to play was invariably accompanied with grimaces and contortions of the facial organs, which were painful to behold. I think I enlisted the sympathies of those who were unaccustomed to hearing me play, as one kind old lady suggested peppermint drops for cramp colic. However, I managed to get through with the waltz, although the perspiration flowed freely from every pore. The applause, when I had finished, was sufficient to gratify the vanity of any first-class performer.

But I was somewhat embarrassed after the smoke had cleared away, when a venerable old man, who was evidently susceptible to the charms of music, regardless of the quality, approached me, and in a trembling voice inquired if I would be so kind as to inform him whether the piece I had just executed was "Mary to the Savior's Tomb" or the waltz.

The above is one instance of the result of a fine performer acting in the capacity of teacher, and although my success was marvelous, I have since learned that there is a more efficient method for the advancement of a musical education than the one I pursued, and I advise pupils to avail themselves of a teacher who in the beginning adheres more strictly to the technicalities of music.

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## More Light.

Susan B. Anthony, in the new Assembly Room at Albany, the other night, defined marriage as "binding one's self to one man during life for board and clothes." We admit that married ladies, as a rule, get their daily bread, providing, in many instances, they possess the physical strength to split wood and make fires to bake it. But in speaking of "clothes," Susan evidently knows nothing of the actual pleasure derived from making midnight tours under the bed, ostensibly in search of burglars, but really in the vain hope of finding a few stray nickels emerging from the pantaloons pocket of that noble specimen of manhood who a

few short years ago declared, "with all my worldly goods I thee endow." Verily, Susan needs more light upon the subject.

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## Home Talk.

The columns of The Home are perused with pleasure, as well as profit, by a multitude of individuals who, like myself, are in pursuit of information which is found to emanate from the pens of your gifted contributors. The advice and kind reproof set forth in such a pleasing manner is invaluable, and really oftentimes meets the demands of those who are sadly perplexed to ascertain the right course before going ahead. The suggestions offered by Beulah in regard to the earnest endeavors of pure-minded women for the reformation of that class of men who can only be reached through the smooth channels of women's influence, are indeed a picture that deserves a golden frame. Women are constantly being censured for their lack of zeal in this particular branch of Christian duty; and we would also refer to the heartless ingratitude with which we are met on every side if we extend a helping hand to a "fallen sister." Let a well-dressed, fashionable lady attempt to raise one of this unfortunate class of individuals to respectability, or reinstate her in good society, and, ninety-nine times out of one hundred, she will bring down reproach and calumny upon her devoted head; and that, too, from those who are loudest in their protestations

that it is a most solemn duty which she cannot shirk with impunity. It is quite possible that the good old "mothers in Israel" might perform this work without the scoffs and inuendoes of their friends; but to them alone would be ascribed the laudable desire of promoting the good of mankind. We believe that a young and pretty woman, no matter how deep her sincerity of purpose, who should attempt to reclaim a fast young man, would be very likely to bring reproach and ignominy upon herself. I do not speak from personal experience, never having tried the experiment, but I have seen it tried very many times, and not unfrequently with serious results to the unfortunate woman who dared to take a decided stand for the right. And I have a distinct recollection of the fiery trials through which a lady friend was called to pass, simply for the reason that she attempted to brave the storm, and bring a persistent outcast back to the enjoyment of intellectual and refined society. She was not only ostracised herself, but her ears were regaled with that little poem, the first line of which reads: "Birds of a feather flock together." And had there been a man in this case (fortunately there was not), doubtless her male friends would have accused her of angling after the heart of this precious piece of manhood.

Winnie set forth a few well-chosen facts, and it appears they fell under the deluded optics of some "noble work of creation," and, as unvarnished truths sometimes touch a tender cord, this misunderstood Winnie was hinted at as the wallflower that bore sour grapes. Never mind,

Winnie, there are a score of lady friends who will bear you out in your assertions, but who have too much delicacy, perhaps, to monopolize the columns of the The Home for the purpose of expressing their opinions. In a discussion with a gentleman friend, regarding this work of reforming the dissolute young men of our land, he was bold enough to say that the ladies who attempted to revolutionize society should be, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion; intimating that such a class would probably succeed in this worthy cause without the annoyance of the aforementioned ridicule. I would say, in vindication of those who are already engaged in this thankless work, that it is rather unusual for suspicious characters to trouble themselves particularly about the morality of their fellow-creatures. Moreover, it would require considerable time and labor for these women to procure references sufficient to satisfy the minds of an American public, who may doubt the purity of their motives; besides, most of them have more important business on hand. I cannot help wondering if Cæsar's wife had been guilty of the atrocious crime of frizzing her hair and wearing a pin-back, if she would have escaped the smirks and peering glances which are so lavishly bestowed upon her fair sisters of the present age, provided they chance to be in a city to which they are strangers, and are so unfortunate as to be unprotected by a — yes, a man. Now, this little article is not written for the purpose of calling forth a retort from any member of The Home circle, for, in the language of our good Rector, in

one of his recent sermons, "If there is anything we despise it is controversy;" but I would ask some older and wiser head than mine to point out clearly our duty, for I honestly confess to being nonplussed oftentimes while reading articles and receiving brief lectures from officious friends in regard to this work of reformation.

# POEMS

## BABY.

Childhood's bright and merry prattle
  Falls upon the mother's ear :
Soothing strain of sweetest music,
  Backward turns the starting tear.

Yesterday, one tender rose-bud,
  Nipped by Death's relentless hand ;
Lying now so cold and silent—
  Baby dwells in Spirit-land.

Angels whisper words of comfort,
  Cheering up the bleeding heart ;
But, alas ! the chord is severed,
  And with Baby we must part.

Tiny footsteps on the stair-case
  Waken up the mother-love ;
Clasping in her arms the treasures,
  Given to her from above.

She, in words of fond endearment,
  Renders thanks for the bequest ;
Tearfully she asks the question,
"Which of these could we spare best?"

Two on Earth, and one in Heaven ;
  Vacant now the baby-chair—
Nothing left but fond remembrance,
  And a curl of golden hair.

## THE OUTCAST.

See the bitter tears of anguish,
  Flowing from their fountain head ;
Broken-hearted and forsaken,
  Begging for her daily bread.
With shame faced'ness she crouches
  Underneath yon towering spire ,
Homeless, friendless, and deserted—
  Whom she is none doth inquire.

Maidens, decked in costly raiment,
  Sweep by her in proud disdain ;
Woman, had'st thou been thus tempted,
  Would thy soul be free from stain ?
Hast thou in thy heart no pity
  For the fallen sisterhood ?
In the lowest, vilest sinner,
  Thou wilt find some germ of good.

Once the robe of truth and virtue
  Worn by her, was bright as thine ;
Love was rife within her bosom—
  Knelt she at the sacred shrine.
Btu alas ! those untaught footsteps,
  Caught within the tempter's snare,
Find no more a home of refuge ;
  Hope is lost in black despair.

By her side the nameless offspring,
  Silent witness of her grief,
Cries in vain for food and shelter—
  Helping hands bring no relief.
Wrapping close the threadbare garment
  For the storm is raging wild ;
Tearful eyes are raised to heaven,
  Pleading for her starving child.

Look ye at her vile seducer,
  Boasting of the victories won,
Lost to manhood's sense of honor,
  Shame or pity he hath none.
Ah ! the oft repeated story :
  Woman's heart so fresh and pure,
Trusting in her lover's promise,
  For his sake all things endure.

Though no wreath of orange blossoms,
  E'er has crowned that mother's head ;
No bright jewel on her finger,
  Tells her heart that she was wed;
Yet upon high Heaven's record,
  Sacred vows eternal stand ;
God metes out to man his portion,
  With His own Almighty hands !

## LAMENTATIONS.

The happy dream is o'er!—one loving heart is broken!
Those blissful days are gone, the last farewell is spoken!
And will he come no more? Must this parting be forever?
Oh, what is life without him! Forget my darling? Never

New joys may come to him, and fill his life with pleasure,
While deep within my heart, fond memories I'll treasure;
And, when other friends prove false, perchance he'll shun
temptation,
If he knows my love for him is built on firm foundation.

Once I believed his love for me had found completeness;
I gathered from his lips the words so fraught with sweet-
ness;
He'll ne'er forget the time, when with tender words, un-
blushing,
I told him that his coolness my loving heart was crushing.

Those happy, happy days! when his love for me, unceasing,
Was the hope on which I lived, my happiness increasing—
Ah! why am I forgot, and life thus filled with sorrow?
There's rest beyond the grave—but earth has no bright
morrow.

Oh, the depth of woman's love! Oh, the sorrow when for-
saken!
Who knoweth of the pangs when her faith in man is shaken?
But my heart is his alone, time nor distance cannot sever
The vows of constancy which God hath sealed forever.

## LEAH.

Sadly we gazed upon that lovely face,
  Pale, tender rosebud, too fragile for earth;
Long before noonday she finished the race—
  We miss her bright smile at the fireside hearth.

Peacefully folded those lily white hands,
  Resting so quietly—beautiful clay—
Chosen to dwell with that heavenly band,
  Our Lord went before to brighten the way.

Fair as the flowers that lay on her breast,
  Sweet as the fragrance that perfumed the air,
Was that sylph-like form! Sleep on, take thy rest;
  Angels watch over with tenderest care.

Dear little lamb, strayed away from the fold;
  Paid a brief visit to loving ones here;
Life was too desolate, dreary and cold,
  She found a true Friend!—the Savior was near.

Why do we mourn for loved ones departed?
  Our treasures are safe in the hands of God!
Let us submit, and, although broken-hearted,
  Find peace in His bosom while kissing the rod.

## QUESTIONINGS.

Why from our arms are loved ones torn?
  Life at the best is dark and drear—
Why must our hearts be called to mourn
  The loss of friends to mem'ry dear?

Why do we wish to linger near
  The grave that holds our buried love?
Why from death do we shrink, and fear
  To join that happy throng above?

Why must we in the dark remain?
  Hath God not said, "Let there be light?"
Why do we plead so oft in vain?
  Father, do we not ask aright?

Why do we dwell on blessings fled?
  Those happy, happy days of yore!
Why cherish the hopes that are dead?
  Departed joys will come no more.

## THE MOURNER.

Reverently she bowed her head,
Silent were the prayers she said;
But the ear that heareth all
Listens for the mourner's call.

Silently she prayed for grace,
While she gazed upon that face,
Cold and passionless in death—
Life is but a fleeting breath.

Heavenly Father lend Thine ear,
Fulfill Thy promises to hear
Thy children, when in faith they pray,
Asking strength from day to day.

Cheerfully the Angels sing,
When to Heaven a soul they bring—
Mourner, dry thy tears to-day,
Christ, with joy, hath paved the way.

Tenderly He views thy grief,
Go to Him and find relief;
Never more on earth depend,
Jesus is thy truest friend.

Fervently His aid was sought,
Bravely was the battle fought;
Soon she raised her tearful eyes;
Christ, the Son, had heard her cries.

Peacefully she turned away—
Farewell! tenement of clay,
Meekly thou thy sorrows bore,
Rest is thine forevermore!

Patiently she bears the cross,
Never murmuring at her loss;
Life with her is just begun,
Not my will, but Thine be done.

## SPRING VIOLETS.

Wake, gentle Violet; lift up thy head;
  Why art thou sorrowful, eyes of blue,
Nestled so cozily down in thy bed,
  Warmed by the sunshine, watered with dew?

Red-breasted choristers sing thee to sleep;
  Angels watch over thy slumbers by night;
Life is too beautiful ever to weep,
  Heaven too glorious, Nature too bright.

Flora hath chosen thee queen of the day—
  Crowned thy fair head with fragrance so rare;
Spring-time hath come! Let clouds pass away,
  Join the glad song of the wood-nymphs so fair!

Heaven hath favored thee, beautiful flower!
  Decked thee in modesty, sweetness and grace;
Made thee a bed in the cool, shady bower—
  Sunbeams are brighter while kissing thy face.

# GENEVA TO ROME

# FROM GENEVA TO ROME.

"Oh! Combien J'aime a voir, dans un beau soir d'ete"
Sur l'ombre reproduit son croissent argente,
Ce lac aux bords riants, aux cimes elancees
Qui dans ce grand miroir se peignent renversees;
Et l'etoile au front d'or, et son eclat tremblant,
Et l'ombrage incertain du saule vacillant."

At the expiration of a three months' sojourn in Geneva, where our time was mostly occupied in the earnest endeavor to solve the unfathomable mysteries of "la Langue Francaise," we decided to take a vacation.

The occasion seemed opportune for the realization of our long-contemplated trip to Southern France and Italy; hence, in order to escape the cold rains and dense fogs which one encounters in Switzerland at the beginning of December, we turned our steps in a southerly direction.

Upon leaving this quiet, historical old city, situated at the lower extremity of Lake Leman, better known as Lake Geneva, a landscape of such harmonious beauty attracts the eye, that it is with a feeling of regret one bids farewell to the gigantic shadows of Mount Blanc, which are clearly outlined against the distant horizon.

With a long, lingering glance at the beautiful Rhone, the blue waters of which flow for miles

side by side with those of the Arve, mingling together, but not blending their contrasting shades, as they form a broad ribbon at the confluence and roll unceasingly along until lost in the limpid waters of the Mediterranean.

A three hours' ride by rail brings us to Culoz, where we cross the French border and proceed on our way to Lyons, connecting at that place with "The Paris, Lyons & Med. R. R." Following closely along the banks of the river, as it winds its way through the beautiful and fertile Rhone valley, our train bears us onward at a rapid rate, making but few stops until our twelve hours' ride is completed, and we find ourselves nearing the beautiful city of Marseilles.

This, we are informed, is the "first seaport of France and of the Mediterranean, that it can accommodate 1,200 vessels and is the third city in size in France, with a population of 350,000."

A week spent in this cosmopolitan city affords one the opportunity of becoming slightly acquainted with many peculiar phases of life. All nationalities are here represented, as the different costumes seen on the streets, as well as the confusion of tongues, bear witness, the latter verifying any exaggerated ideas one may have previously indulged regarding the Tower of Babel.

One of the finest sights, however, is the harbor, where ships of all dimensions may be seen flying the national colors of so many different countries that one becomes bewildered in the vain attempt to designate the government to which each belongs.

We recall a little incident, hardly worth recording, yet at the time it afforded us great pleasure, when a fellow-countryman rushed into the hotel where we were staying, and in an excited manner announced that an "American Frigate" had just arrived and was lying at the wharf.

Actuated by love for the old stars and stripes, a small party of ladies set out at once to pay their respects to the distinguished guest. None, save those who have made the sacrifice, can imagine the feelings of emotion that thrill the heart of a true patriot, when, after a year's absence from his native land, he catches a glimpse of the American flag. There are many pleasant drives, and much to interest the tourist in this magnificent city; but our allotted time being inadequate to do justice to all, we simply endeavor to photograph upon our memory a general impression of the city and its environments, and hasten on to Nice.

After leaving Marseilles, the attention of the traveler is divided between the picturesque scenery on the one side, and the broad bosom of the Mediterranean on the other. The road winds in and out through glade and glen, giving to each mile of the way a varied interest, such as one must ever feel in making their first trip along the Riviera. Here and there an orange grove, a clump of fig-trees or a hedge of flowering cactus, add to the beauty of the scene; and one begins to realize some of the inducements that bring such vast multitudes to this section of country during the winter months.

Arriving at Nice, we find one of the most beautiful cities in the south of France. It is situated on the "Bai des Anges" at the mouth of a small stream called the "Paglione." Nice in winter is the great resort for invalids; yet many seek this sequestered spot, simply to enjoy the balmy atmosphere which a more northerly section does not afford. Here one meets with many English-speaking tourists of various nationalities, and from a careful perusal of the registers, in the leading hotels, one finds that English and Americans predominate. Although there are a goodly number of French, Russians and Germans here at the present time. Like famous seaside resorts in America, hotel rates are exorbitant during the height of the season, which is a matter of necessity, no doubt, as we are told the town is almost entirely deserted in summer. To one who has spent most of her winters in the rigorous climate of Minnesota, the sight of an orange grove in January, bearing fruit in every state, from the half-open bud, to the full-grown fruit in all its perfection, is a phenomenon to say the least. Near the hotel where we are staying is a "Jardin Public," where a fine band discourses music each day from two to four P. M. Here the people assemble by hundreds, many of the ladies in "costumes magnifique" with the necessary appendage of a string, with a maid at one end and a dog at the other. During these two festive hours a careful observer discovers many an *affaire d'amour* in all its various stages from incipiency to consummation. A peculiar feature of the climate here, and one we should judge was hardly

conducive to health, is the sudden changes in temperature which we have experienced each day thus far. Until ten A. M. there is a cold, chilly feeling which necessitates a fire in our room; after which, there is a sudden rise in the temperature that increases until about three P. M., at which time it becomes uncomfortably warm.

As early as four P. M. a breeze is felt, and, simultaneously with this change a dampness is experienced in the atmosphere, that produces a sensation, as some one expresses it, "not unlike a cold, wet blanket thrown over the shoulders." From this time on, until the following morning, there is no feeling of comfort obtained ten feet away from a fire.

A brief sojourn in a foreign city is hardly supposed to offer the opportunity for one to become a particular star in the social horizon; yet it was our pleasure to be the happy recipient of an invitation to dine with one of the old and respected families of the place.

Not knowing that we had been made the subject of a correspondence between "mine hostess" and the lady with whom we boarded in Geneva, we were greatly surprised, as well as pleased, to be sought out and kindly asked to "honor the company with our presence" upon this occasion. Now, to be the guest of honor at a banquet in a foreign city, where one is wholly ignorant of the rules which govern society, and especially where not one of the participants are able to speak a word of English, is something of an ordeal to one who has but an imperfect knowledge of the lan-

guage of the country. However, as a protracted stay in continental Europe had prepared us for most any emergency, we unhesitatingly assumed the onerous duty. Being asked to appear "*en avance*" of the other *convives*, we presented ourself at an early hour as requested, and were delightfully entertained by the hostess, who received us in a most cordial manner, assuring us, "*qu elle etait tres heureuse de faire notre connaisance.*" After having asked questions innumerable, regarding our American life in general, she remembered having had a dear friend locate in a city in close proximity to New York. Several ineffectual attempts to recall the name of this particular city, proved her memory defective, and she finally begged us to name several of the leading cities near New York. We complied with her request, mentioning every place of importance that we knew, in the New England states, and as far west as Chicago; but they bore no resemblance in sound to the city in question. But she finally, after a careful research among an antiquated pile of archives, informed us gleefully, that she had succeeded in finding it; that it was *Shanghai.* And this recalls another similar experience that we had in Germany. A lady inquired if we were familiar with the towns along the upper Mississippi. Having lived for many years upon the green banks of that grand old stream, we answered in the affirmative; when she eagerly told us that she had a cousin living in a city on the upper Mississippi. We naturally asked the name of the place when she, too, showed symptoms of failing mem-

ory, but a few moments of quiet meditation opened up the avenues of recollection, and she cheerfully announced "*Montreal*" as the place referred to. But time is precious and we must say "*Au revoir*" to beautiful Nice, and proceed on to Genoa, which is the next stopping place on our programme.

Historians could find sufficient matter to fill volumes in contemplating this famous seaport, which has been the scene of devastation, wars and bloodshed, as has been the case with nearly all European cities. The town is surrounded by fortifications dating back to the seventeenth century; and upon the distant elevation may still be seen many of the old forts.

Genoa is a commercial center of much importance, and numbers about 140,000 inhabitants. The beautiful situation of this Italian city, together with its many objects of interest, make it decidedly attractive to the tourist, who is paying his first visit to the vicinity which produced the "Discoverer of America." The house in which Columbus is said to have been born is in "Cogoleto," a few miles out of Genoa. It is now a wayside inn and bears the latter inscription, "*Hospes, siste gradum. Fuit hic lux prima Columbo; orbe viro majori heu arcta do mus. Unus erat mundus. Duo sunt ait iste. Fuere.*"

In the "plazza acquaverde" stands a handsome marble statue of Columbus, erected in 1862. Kneeling at the feet of this statue, is a figure representing America. Around the base are numerous "allegorical figures," representing some distinctive feature in the past, present or future, the

significance of which is unknown to the writer; but if the American tourist doubts that he carries the impress of his nationality indelibly stamped upon his person, his mind will be disabused of the illusion when he finds himself surrounded by half a dozen guides, all eager to escort him to the wonderful monument of "Christo Colombo, the discoverer of Americo." Here we encountered a horde of mendicants in all states of degradation. Men, women, and children, flock together in herds upon the streets, or crouched in abject misery under the friendly shelter of some ancient wall. Incredible as it may seem, it is nevertheless true that as we were driving through one of the principal streets of Genoa, a bevy of these wretched, half famished creatures, ran, or crawled along after our carriage, and clinging to the wheels implored aid in some sort of Jargon, which was incomprehensible, only as they crossed themselves, and raised their eyes in the attitude of prayer, as if invoking Divine assistance in their efforts to attract our attention. Having been previously warned of this state of affairs, and the consequence, we had provided ourselves with a quantity of small coins, of infinitesimal value, and, in order to abate the nuisance, we hurled a handful of these little pieces into the street, whereupon the poor wretches dropped from the wheels like so many satiated leeches, and we motioned the driver to move on rapidly, while we left them scrambling in the dust for these coveted treasures.

But gladly as we would tarry by the way, we must hasten on to Pisa, which is our next objective

point. Many places of interest along the "Riviera" must necessarily be left for a future visit, as our time is limited, and we must content ourselves with a passing glance only at the objects of such wondrous beauty that greet us upon every side. The distance from Genoa to Pisa being about one hundred miles, it is easily reached in five hours by rail, although many prefer the trip by water to Leghorn, as daily boats ply between these points, and the journey by water is said to be very enjoyable.

Pisa is a small, quiet town, situated on the river Arno, and inland from the sea some five or six miles. It is rich in historical fame as it "became a Roman colony as early as the year 180 B. C." One of its chief attractions is its world-renowned "Leaning Tower." To our uncultivated American taste, there is nothing very gratifying to the eye in "Leaning Towers" in general, and taking this as a specimen, they can hardly be classed among the things of beauty; although this particular one will doubtless be a joy forever to the inhabitants of Pisa. It is said to be thirteen feet out of the perpendicular, and its height to be 179 feet. Whether this peculiarity is intentional or accidental is not known; but to one who is an adherent to the eternal fitness of things, the latter would seem a more reasonable solution of the cause of this monstrosity. Some say that the "foundation settled while it was in course of construction, hence an attempt was made to give a vertical position to the upper portion." One ascends to the top by a winding staircase of 294 steps, actual count; and the writer

found upon application for admission to make the ascent, that no fewer than three persons were allowed to ascend together. The custodian, however, will supply the deficiency by paying him a small fee. From the summit one obtains a fine view of the distant mountains in one direction, while far away to the west the blue waters of the Mediterranean are plainly visible. The "Campo-Santa" which is a burial ground, draws many visitors daily, as it is here that the archbishops, after the loss of the Holy Land, brought some fifty-three shiploads of earth from Mount Calvary in order that the dead might repose in Holy ground. The marble walls of these ancient churches contain rare designs in mosaics; while sculptured images, in wood and stone, adorn the altars; and the impersonations by the old masters of saints and sinners, who ages since passed through the dark portals, to the realms of the Unknown, all combined, form an art gallery that fills the beholder with wonder and admiration.

But Pisa, with its numerous attractions, must not detain us beyond the comparatively small space allotted to it, and while our reluctant feet turn to other scenes and objects, we can, at least, treasure up for the future the bright visions of the past, and erect a monument in our hearts, which will be sacred to its memory. A few miles farther on our journey, and here we are at Florence, "The Athens of Italy," sixty miles east of Pisa. In coming from Pisa to Florence, we traverse a rich and fertile country lying at the base of "The Appennines." To give a minute description of this de-

lightful trip, would require more time than the writer can bestow upon even this beautiful section of country. This lovely city is situated on both banks of the "Arno," a small unimportant stream as it appears to us now; however, during the rainy season it is said to increase its dimensions in a greater or less degree. Winding around through a picturesque valley, it seems to be swallowed up in a cluster of the Appennines. Would that our feeble pen could portray the enchanting scenes with which this art city is replete; but we must needs confine ourself to a brief mention of some of the chief attractions, as they are unfolded for our inspection. All along the annals of ancient history, these old Italian cities have furnished material with which to feed and clothe the intellectual life; and as Florence takes rank with the three sister cities, Rome, Naples and Venice, so much has already been said and written in her praise, that anything that we might add would be superfluous. History tells us that the "city was devastated by hordes of barbarians during the dark ages, and revived again about the eleventh century."

The city walls have nearly all been removed, but some of the ancient gates still stand as reminders of the past. As an art center, no doubt, Florence stands to-day unrivalled by any other in continental Europe; while in intellectual culture she is conceded to "surpass the rest of Italy." To have visited the "Pitti" and "Uffizzi" galleries alone, is sufficient in itself to create an insatiable love and enthusiasm for the fine arts, in whatever form they

may be presented. Nothing short of an experimental knowledge however, of the wonderful creations contained in these two galleries, can furnish the reader with an adequate idea of their immensity and grandeur. But to appreciate the jewels which stand unparalleled in the glorious realm of realistic imagery, would require a life-long study of the simple rudiments, belonging to the art world! Here all schools are represented. Italian, French, German, Venetian, Dutch, Flemish—in fact, every conceivable style, grade and finish, appertaining to the fine arts in all their entirety, are combined within these massive walls; and to those, who, from a lack of association or otherwise, shrink from the imaginary vulgarity of, "The Nude in Art" we can say that the human form divine, as portrayed by these master hands, is clothed with a dignity and a sanctity that disarms criticism. One sees but the magic hand of the Artist, and not his subject!

The churches and cathedrals are among the chief attractions of this world-renowned city; to visit all of which, would require many days; hence the more celebrated only, are explored during the brief stay that is accorded to most tourists. The "Piazza del Duomo" with the Baptistry and Cathedral S-Marco, and the Monastery, the churches of S-Croce, S-Lorenzo with "la Cathedrale di S-Maria del flore" erected in the twelfth century, with a few others of equal celebrity, served to satisfy the curiosity of the writer, whose brief stay of two weeks afforded only a passing glance at these productions of many past generations.

But we must not attempt to treat this inexhaustible subject within the narrow limits of a newspaper article; but trust to other, and more capable pens to draw this gigantic picture with all its lights and shadows upon the human intellect. One leaves Florence, as they do most other cities in the Old World, with a feeling of sadness and regret that memory can carry away so little of that great whole, which lies beyond the grasp of the human mind.

And so on to Rome!

"Rome the eternal city!
What may not be said of this city of the dead?"

Before coming to Rome, one feels that all has been said of it; all has been written that the most vivid imagination can conceive. But a brief sojourn here, disabuses the mind of that error, and we close the shutters, and draw the curtain to shut out the blinding rays, as the veil is cast aside and we emerge from the darkness and obscurity, in which our ignorance had clothed us. And what can we do that,

"This mighty vision may not seem
The effect of fancy—or an idle dream."

What scenes have not been enacted in this valley of the Tiber, where Rome stands a monument to her own greatness, before which kings and sovereigns must kneel with uncovered heads.

A city founded in the year "753" and increased in importance until it became the "capitol of the world." The human mind is hardly of sufficient elasticity to stretch over this vast area of time;

yet here we stand to-day, face to face with the sublime truths which history has recorded, and with a reverential feeling, such as one experiences in the presence of death, we bow our head in adoration, as we meekly tread the sacred ground upon which our Saviour trod. Were it our intention to even briefly describe what our eyes hath beheld, we could hardly determine where to begin; but modesty forbids that we should so over-rate our ability as to attempt, what others, far up the ladder of literary fame, have so poorly portrayed. Saint Peters and the Vatican, the Roman Forum and Colosseum, Temple of Neptune—Palatine Hill and the Palace of the Cæsars, Arches of Constantine and of Titus—Pantheon and Trajans—Forum, the Fountain of Treve, and the Scala Santa, all fill us with wonder, not unmixed with awe, and our only regret is, that history is unable to reveal, in a comprehensive manner, the beauty and sublimity of this ancient city.

The programme for the first day spent in Rome, usually includes a visit to the Great Cathedral and the Vatican. Strolling through the winding labyrinths of these immense structures, one finds himself buried in the memories of the past. Neither the pen of Shakespeare or the pencil of a Hogarth could do justice to the scene that is here presented. The interior of St. Peter's is something indescribable—the magnificence of which surpasses anything that the most fertile imagination can picture. Weeks might be spent here profitably, in studying the works which have required centuries to bring into their present state

of perfection. After a hasty glance at the massive structure in its entirety, we ascend to the dome, where a fine view is obtained of the city and its environments. Far away to the east may be seen the low range of "The Appennines" as they lie stretched along the horizon, casting their dark, purple shadows over the ever-changing landscape; while winding slowly along the valley below, flow the muddy, sluggish waters of the Tiber.

The Monuments, Obelisks, Fountains, Arches and Temples, in fact, all that go to make up this wonderful city, so impresses the beholder with their antiquity, that we are prone to ask if there is anything new under the sun. "The Corso," the principal street, bears some resemblance to those of modern times; yet as a whole, Rome is unlike any city to be found in the Old World. The "Roman Forum" reminds us of some vast ruin, with here and there an object of more than ordinary interest, which would escape observation were the visitor not favored by the interesting lectures given on the spot by "Forbes," the author of "Rambles in Rome." But should one attempt a minute examination of the remaining portion of the "old Forum," his visit must needs be of long duration. Excavations are being carried on here, and each day some new object of interest is unearthed. The "Colosseum" is also a ruin, but the crumbling walls still tell their tale of those barbarous times when the scenes here enacted for the amusement of aristocracy cast a dark shadow upon the semi-civilization of that period. Centuries ago, when multitudes gathered on this spot to

witness the exhibitions given by "Gladiators," in deadly combat with wild and ferocious beasts, tearing their quivering flesh to shreds, fighting like demons from the lower regions, amid the applause of an admiring audience; all this arises in the mind of the visitor, and causes a thrill of horror to vibrate through his entire being.

We next turned our weary footsteps in the direction of "The Catacombs," and, as we groped our way through the long narrow passages in these subterranean passages, we stood appalled as the lighted taper in our trembling hand was suddenly extinguished, and we found ourself alone in the darkness some yards in the rear of our guide. The walls of this strange, weird place are cut up into small cells, each containing the ashes of some defunct celebrity, or possibly common mortal, we did not stop to inquire, but were shocked, as our curiosity led us to investigate one of these small cemetery lots, and we thrust our hand into what was said to be "human ashes." These narrow, winding passages extend for miles underground, making it verily a "city of the dead." Of the churches, as many of them as we visited, "St. Paul's outside the walls, in point of beauty takes foremost rank. To describe this magnificent structure is among the impossibilities, and we leave it as we do most other things, for our readers to look up at their leisure, and learn of the beauties thereof, as depicted by more able writers. The "Santa scala" (sacred stairs) is in the "S. Giovanna in Laterno," in short, St. John's church. These stairs are said to have been brought from Jerusalum, "where they

formed the staircase to Pilate's house." None are allowed to ascend them save on their knees, and at the time of our visit some nine or ten persons were crawling along up these stairs, mumbling a prayer to some particular Saint in whose eyes, no doubt, they believed themselves to have found favor; and thus doing penance for some real or imaginary transgression of the Sacred Law. The task is not easy, as a trial would prove, to thus use the knee-caps in place of feet; and when added to the torture, small sacs of peas or beans are deftly placed around the knees in order to inflict greater pain, the agony must be almost unendurable. But all this in order to appease the wrath of an outraged God, and obtain pardon for sin by having suffered in the flesh. Oh, consistency! thou art a jewel. This scene impressed us deeply with the ignorance and superstition so prevalent on every side.

Upon entering the Vatican, which some one has said "resembles a large factory," permission must be obtained to visit the entire premises before proceeding to any particular department. We visited the "Sistine Chapel" first, and our attention was at once attracted to the scene above the altar, where is presented Michael Angelo's great fresco, "The Last Judgment." This picture is, to the writer, one of the most unwarranted libels on the promised mercy of an Omnipotent God conceivable to the imagination. We would not describe it if we could—but enough! We saw it, and while it was calculated to impress upon the mind the horrors of "The Inferno" it had a contrary effect and was

instrumental in raising a doubt in our orthodox belief as to the reality of "Hades." Such a look of appeal, mingled with indescribable agony, as was depicted upon the faces of those helpless beings, as, with eyes cast down at the yawning chasm of the bottomless pit, or upturned, imploring Divine mercy at the hands of their Creator; seated upon his Throne of Justice—was sufficient to melt the heart of the vilest sinner. Such entreaties must surely appeal to the sympathy of the Supreme Being. Many of the most celebrated works of the old masters are exhibited in the different rooms, showing the exquisite workmanship of "Angelo, Raphael, Rubens and Correggio," with their long train of successors; but the one we admired most was "The Transfiguration," Raphael's master-piece.

And now, a few words about "The Appian Way," and we must bid farewell to Rome. The "Appian Way," is the great Southern road from Rome. In riding out some fifteen miles along this road, only a faint idea can be obtained of it, as it takes five days, on foot, to perform the entire distance from Rome to Capua. But a few miles gives one some idea of the magnificence of this "Queen of Roads." Its width will admit of two vehicles passing without collision, and the material of which it is composed, is so hard, that the constant wear of ages has failed to produce any apparent signs of decay. Along this way, on either side, are to be seen numerous Churches, Temples and Tombs, all of which present a strange and wierd appearance, The "House of Hadrian, Tomb of the Scipios

Chapel of the Seven Sleepers," and many more of those ancient land-marks, the very name of which cause us to pinch our flesh to see if we are really alive, were pointed out by our guide. These Temples and Tombs contain the ashes of the old Romans, as history tells us that they "Buried their dead along the principal roads leading from the city." This road is said to be the one over which our Savior passed, when entering Rome; and upon the floor of an ancient church, along the way, may be seen dark stains, resembling blood, which our guide told us flowed from "His Holy Feet" while engaged in Worship in this edifice. Such are the legends with which one is regaled by a loquacious guide, providing his knowledge of any language, with which his audience is familiar, will permit.

There may, or may not, be a grain of truth mixed with all the superstition that one encounters, but we are prepared, since our advent into Rome, to take any statement as a literal fact, believing all things possible.

Tomorrow we go to Naples, hence must close this letter, as it is impossible to longer concentrate our thoughts upon any one subject, when confronted by visions of "Vesuvius, Pompeii and Herculaneum."

## THE OLD MAN'S REVERIE.

I oft recall those happy hours,
  Long buried in the past,
That filled my heart with transient joy,
  Then fled away so fast.
To me the years like moments seem,
  Since Jane and I were wed;
Alas! the happy dream is o'er—
  She's numbered with the dead.

I smoke my pipe in solitude,
  And then, with book in hand—
I fall asleep—is it a dream?
  I'm in some far-off land!
And voices hushed long years ago;
  Fall on my listening ear,
And one that's sweeter far than all;
  I fancy I can hear.

With trembling lips and bated breath,
  I strive to catch each word;
Is it a voice from Spirit-land
  That I so plainly heard?
In gentle accents sweet and low,
  It whispers from afar:
"Thy crown is almost ready now;
  It only lacks a star!"

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